



**National Council of
Women of New Zealand**
Te Kaunihera
Wahine O Aotearoa

National Office
Level 4 Central House
26 Brandon Street
PO Box 25-498
Wellington 6146
(04)473 76 23
office@ncwnz.org.nz
www.ncwnz.org.nz

19 May 2015

S15.16

Submission to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade on the Draft New Zealand National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions, including 1325, on Women, Peace and Security 2015 – 2019

Introduction

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) is an umbrella group representing 288 women's organisations affiliated at either the national level or to one of our 21 branches throughout the country. In addition to our organisational membership, some 260 women are individual members of branches. NCWNZ's function is to represent and promote the interests of New Zealand women through research, discussion and action.

The NCWNZ Submission

This submission has been prepared by the National President, the NCWNZ Board, the NCWNZ Public Issues and Parliamentary Watch Committees after limited consultation with our membership. An NCWNZ member also attended the Public Consultation Forum held in Wellington on 5 May 2015.

Background

NCWNZ has a long and rich history advocating for equal opportunity in employment, including gender balance in the police force, for peace, and for women's participation in international affairs. NCWNZ has been involved for many years in discussion of and in making submissions on the related topics of violence against women and peace and most particularly in advocating for women's engagement in peacekeeping and peace making. Of particular relevance to the National Action Plan, we refer to our recent Submission (S15.06) to Government, Submission to the Nonviolent Peace force on the UN Peace Operations (attached). Included as an appendix to this submission is a summary from our publication 115 Years of Resolutions listing the NCWNZ's deep commitment to peace and nonviolent conflict resolution since its inception over 100 years ago.

Discussion

NCWNZ congratulates the Government on the development of the Draft National Action Plan and wholeheartedly supports the four thematic areas, Prevention, Participation, Protection, and Peace building, Relief and Recovery on which the action plans and their measurement are based. NCWNZ also acknowledges that New Zealand has comprehensive legislation in place to protect the human rights of women and girls and that our country ranks high in measuring equality of opportunity for women. Other countries within our Pacific sphere and further afield do not share many of these advantages and the National Action Plan provides a robust framework on which to focus New Zealand's international responsibilities towards increasing women's leadership in peace making and conflict prevention.

NCWNZ believes that Resolution 1325 is a document of enormous significance emanating as it does from the Security Council – one of the United Nations most important and influential bodies. We are therefore pleased to note that the Draft Plan not only seeks to meet the requirements of Resolution 1325 but also of the more recent related Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2102 and 2106 as it is only the consideration of these as a whole which can hope to ensure that women in conflict and post conflict situations are protected from violence but also that women become active participants in decision making on all matters of peace building and peacekeeping. We endorse the argument in the Draft that an overarching gender perspective must be introduced, not only because there are experiences distinctive to women in conflict situations but also because “the violence and inequalities that women face in crises do not exist in a vacuum but are the direct results and reflections of the violence, discrimination and marginalisation that women face in times of relative peace. Such gender inequality also results in women being largely excluded from decision-making processes, conflict prevention and peace building activities, due to a variety of country-specific social and cultural factors”¹.

Specific Reactions to the National Action Plan.

1. Key issues you would like to see covered in the plan

- (i) It is NCWNZ's firm view that women's experiences of violence, victimisation and discrimination in conflict situations tend to reflect the culture of the community in which they live in times of peace. Only by educating whole communities and achieving core cultural change can the factors which generate violence and social disruption be eliminated and women can hope to take their equal place in determining peaceful outcomes to conflict, violence and discrimination.
- (ii) Peace Operations would be enhanced if planners spent significant advance time listening directly to people at the grass roots, especially women, traditional and tribal leaders (not only men), in the conflict affected areas. More women should be among the planners, including women who are not in the military but have experience in mediation and cross-cultural communication.

¹ Australian Federation of Graduate Women NAP Paper 2009

Women from the conflict-affected country could be especially valuable in advising the planners. Even in matriarchal societies such as Bougainville, women's voices tended to become lost in crisis situations.

2. Proposed additional actions into the plan itself

- (i) NCWNZ wishes to see more emphasis in the Action Plans placed on improving the educational and economic situation of women in conflict affected countries in which New Zealand has some influence. Improving the education and economic wellbeing of women and girls is a powerful factor in determining whose voices will be heard in decision making.
- (ii) The Action plan should include education for males and females regarding gender violence. Women need to feel safe.
- (iii) We suggest that the Millennium Development Goals and the post 2015 Development Goals should be added to the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW as relevant for developing a gender framework of the NAP.
- (iv) There appears to be no clear mechanism for accountability of peacekeeping corps or local communities and NGOs working in the area to the gender-balanced inter-agency Women, Peace and Security Advisory Group.
- (v) Pre-deployment training in areas such as Violence Against Women and gender issues is also important.
- (vi) Local civilians and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) provide language and cultural skills necessary to cultivate relationships with local people. Local groups that serve as connectors need to be recognized. In many instances, working with local people can improve communication and understanding, build trust between the mission and the local community and enhance protection of civilians.

3. Aspects of the plan that you see as a key strength

The key strength of the Draft Plan is that it considers ways to meet the requirements not only of Resolution 1325, but also of the related Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889, 1960, 2102 and 2106 as it is only consideration of these together that will achieve the stated aim: namely the development of a coordinated, coherent and comprehensive system, effective in advancing the equality of women, not only by ensuring that those in conflict and post-conflict situations are protected from violence but also that women become active participants in decision-making on all matters of peace building and peacekeeping.

Women should be visible in all peacekeeping roles and post conflict accountability and transitional justice structures, which, as well as its significant post conflict contribution helps encourage women and girls, particularly victims of sexual violence, to report offenses.

4. Any actions in the plan with which you have concerns, and why

- (i) NCWNZ is concerned that the NAP has been primarily prepared by Government Agencies such as the NZDF and Police who have the resources to do so and that the Ministry for Women, New Zealand NGOs, Business and Civil Society Organisations have not been included. The NAP Plans reflect this with the Responsible Lead organisations being restricted to NZDF, Police and MFAT. Real progress will only be made by mobilising the skills and experiences available across the whole spectrum of New Zealand society.
- (ii) We believe there is a real need to be fully prepared to include more skilled and trained women in future peace making and peacekeeping operations rather than relying on the current reactive approach of deploying primarily Defence and Police personnel when the need arises. We acknowledge that there are funding implications to this approach but we are convinced that the objectives of the NAP cannot be fully met without an increase in capacity and resources.
- (iii) Resource management systems need to be inclusive, non-divisive and transparent. Peacekeeping missions should provide some of their resources to local CSOs who are doing civilian protection work.
- (iv) The detailed plan of action lists the impact areas, actions to be taken, indicators of success and the agencies responsible for each action. NCWNZ believes that the Measurement Indicators require a great deal of strengthening otherwise this plan will be consigned to the “Rhetoric” rather than “Action” category. Specific targets need to be set for each action with clear, unambiguous measurements attached to each one. Also we believe there is an urgent need to focus on the quality of women’s participation – not just on an increase in numbers.
- (v) Peacekeeping missions need to have ongoing monitoring that includes active input from local civil society with corrections made as a result of this monitoring. This must facilitate post-project evaluation processes.

5. Any other comments

- (i) Peacekeeping missions are usually only short-term and focus on conflict resolution and not longer-term, more sustainable approaches of prevention and transformation.
- (ii) There needs to be a balance between security and effectiveness, which could be reached by allowing personnel on the ground greater autonomy to decide on which security measures are appropriate and beneficial.
- (iii) Armed peacekeepers are typically trained for conventional warfare and thus, not well equipped to deal with current civilian protection needs. Both highly mobile non-state actors as well as the host country’s security forces often threaten civilians.
- (iv) Peacekeepers need to focus on the causes of the conflict, working with local people at community level to address the basic issues. They should include more civilians with

development and mediation experience. Women would be key participants since they could relate better to the experience of local women.

NCWNZ White Paper

NCWNZ is developing a white paper setting out the current state of gender equality in New Zealand and what we need to do to progress. This clearly shows that despite our country ranking high in the global indices measuring equality for women we still have a recognised gender equality issue in New Zealand that is both holding us back as a country and letting down our citizens. The White Paper's recommended Action Plan bears many similarities to those in the National Action Plan with the exception that they are primarily focussed on achieving equality for women within New Zealand. However what they do clearly show is that the many and varied affiliated groups, branches and individual members of NCWNZ have the potential to be a force for change and to work alongside Government in helping to achieve the objectives in the National Action Plan.

NCWNZ is ready, willing and able to assist the Government in any way it can to achieve its NAP objectives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rae Duff', is enclosed in a thin black rectangular border.

Rae Duff
National President

Appendix

A summary of relevant resolutions from NCWNZ's 2010 publication *115 Years of Resolution*

Chapter 11 – International Relations and Peace

11.2 Disarmament

11.2.1 That National Council of Women of New Zealand deplores the continuous growth of armaments throughout the world. It sees that people are crushed by ever-increasing military expenditure, and that they are alienated from one another by the rivalries of their respective rulers. The Council deprecates any project likely to involve Australasia in the participation of warfare and strenuously protests against the Imperial consideration of these colonies as a recruiting ground for European militarism. 1898, reiterated 1899.

11.4 International Meetings

11.4.2 That the Government be asked to include a woman or women as delegate or delegates to overseas conferences. 1945.

11.9 Overseas Aid

11.9.13 That the National Council of Women request the Minister of Foreign Affairs to ensure that: 1) all projects funded by the New Zealand Government are assessed in both planning and implementation for their impact on women; 2) income generating projects for women funded by the New Zealand Government are based on: a) the long term prospects of income; and b) other skills in addition to manual that the women will acquire. 1985.

11.10 Peace

11.10.10 That the National Council of Women of New Zealand urge for women representatives on any councils, national or international, authorised by Governments to discuss peace problems. 1940.

11.10.11 That Branches be asked to set aside one meeting during the year for discussion on the subject of the part women can play towards peace and that affiliated societies be urged to do the same. 1947.

11.10.17 That NCWNZ endorses initiatives by women to negotiate for the peaceful resolution, at both local and global levels, of long-standing conflicts in their regions. 2006.

11.13 United Nations

11.13.2 That NCWNZ urge the Government of New Zealand to use its influence internationally to support the establishment of a special United Nations mediation unit for third party conflict resolution to work in conjunction with the Security Council. 1998.

Chapter 18 - The Status of Women

18.1 Appointments of Women

18.1.1.6

b) N.C.W. of N.Z. reaffirms the remit urging the Government to include women as delegates or advisors to all N.Z. or overseas conferences, committees or commissions, having on their agenda papers subjects of direct interest to women. (Example: I.L.O., F.A.O., UNICEF, dairy prices, subsidies on N.Z. food, housing, etc.)

18.3.1 CEDAW

18.10.3 That NCWNZ recommends that Government applies a robust model of gender analysis for all policy development. 2008.



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24 February 2015

S15.06

Submission to the Nonviolent Peaceforce on the UN Peace Operations

The National Council of Women of New Zealand (NCWNZ) is an umbrella group representing 288 organisations affiliated at either the national level or to one of our 21 branches. In addition to our organisational membership, about 260 women are individual members of branches. NCWNZ's function is to represent and promote the interests of New Zealand women through research, discussion and action. This submission has been prepared by one of our members based on her extensive experience.

Introduction

The key issue for military peacekeepers is that their basic training is to be soldiers, to do battle against a perceived enemy. Peacekeeping is seen as a way to keep opposing factions apart and to attempt to ensure that there is no more bloodshed. They seldom understand the root causes of the conflict, especially when their own country might have had some responsibility (through colonisation or policies in their own country) for the conflict. They may have a mandate to assist with development but this is often seen as "winning hearts and minds" rather than participating in genuine and necessary development projects that are based on building local capacity through working in partnership with local people, especially the women.

In countries undergoing conflict, the women are usually those trying to maintain a living and keep families together, while the men are fighting – or dead. These women are unlikely to be included and consulted as part of a peace exercise.

Peacekeeping missions are usually male-dominated. The men are often young, away from home and may be under extreme pressure due to the conflict. They need to relax during non-working time and often look to local women for short-term relationships. They do not understand the culture and the vulnerability of the women who may be hoping to get away to a peaceful situation. If civilian women were included in peace missions, they could monitor such situations, ensuring that both parties understood possible consequences.

How could current peace keeping operations benefit from the input of civil society organizations? What is, or could be, civil societies' contribution to peace operations?

Civil society organisations, both local and international, work in local communities. Many have been in place for a long time and, if from overseas, have worked to understand the culture. They do not see themselves as permanent but are providing necessary skills until local people can take over again. Peacekeepers often have little respect for these organisations, considering them to be “do-gooders” who achieve very little. They do not understand the long-term aspect of development, especially because most peacekeeper deployments are for only 6 months – they want to achieve as much as possible during that time, by doing it all themselves. CSOs in the peacekeepers' home country should always participate in pre-deployment training.

What would peace operations look like if they were designed to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war?

They would focus on the causes of the conflict, working with local people at community level to address the basic issues. They would include more civilians with development and mediation experience. Women would be key participants since they could relate better to the experience of local women.



Rae Duff

National President NCWNZ