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#WOMENARENATO

*Because women
bring good solutions
and pragmatism*



Women engagement in security

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NATO is stronger with women on board



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Challenges to our collective security are not evenly perceived among both women and men. In the last Pew Research Centre global threat perception report, women across the globe – especially in NATO countries show – significantly more concern about key security challenges like ISIS or North Korea than men. NATO is responding to these challenges, but the perception of its performance varies depending on gender, and to keep the alliance robust, it needs support regardless of any perceptive divisions. In other words, it has to engage equally both women and men on all fronts from diplomatic and civilian to military efforts.

The purpose of Visegrad Insight's #WomenAreNATO initiative is to offer a platform for the underrepresented voices of women – female opinion-shapers who stand up for a more secure and democratic world which is now facing different challenges. We are all – women and men – touched by the serious threats in our lives, and although being half of the population, fewer women respond actively to these threats. It is not easy to hypothesise why this is the case. Perhaps fewer women are interested in the related topics or have been given the opportunity to understand security properly; possibly, the public debates focused on shaping the international policies are not easily accessible to them.

Apart from securing peaceful, stable and democratic political order – security in terms of military and defence – the realm of security also includes securing our culture and values

such as the freedom of speech, media freedoms, gender equality as well as our economic and humanitarian values, among others. Such a wide range of topics necessitates engagement with all social groups, including women. Women cannot stand aside; an equal sign cannot simply be put between security and war; we need to address the everyday dangers from crime and terrorism but also incorporate how to avoid deteriorating situations. Yes, many can be trained to be soldiers or tough personalities. Generally, though, women should learn how to have their voices heard and how to exert their influence as a pressure group in the broadly understood wider context.

Security is a women's issue, and their role is crucial and might be very different to what many imagine. The diversity of women working in security and in high-profile career paths can act as inspiration for future generations or those working in various sectors at all levels who do not see the importance of security in this broader sense.

NATO, therefore, spends a considerable amount of effort to make women active and equally represented in the security world. The Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda has been extensively promoted, and all NATO initiatives conform to it. More and more NATO member states are following the UN Security Council Resolution #1325, and are implementing National Action Plans (NAP), which are focused on supporting women's full participation in peace and security efforts, to prevent, address and fight impunity for conflict-related sexual violence and to consolidate women's and girls' empowerment to advance gender equality, including in the world's most dangerous and complex conflicts. This is highly important that we are there, that we have a say, that we take an equal share in such NATO endeavours.

The countries of Visegrad Group are not pioneers when it comes to implementing these strategies, sadly. Poland has finally introduced its own NAP at the end of 2018 (18 years after UNSCR #1325 was approved), and its army consists of only around 6% of female-soldiers most of which (75%) do not belong to the higher ranks, and there are currently no active female generals. The concern raises when Slovakia, Czechia and Hungary are brought

into the picture. Though their military spendings are each above 1.5 bln USD, domestic decision-makers affirm support for WPS agendas and these countries participate in international peace missions, none of the countries has introduced a NAP.

Czechia, however, has a female-general and 13% of all Czech professional soldiers are women, placing it fifth highest among NATO countries as regards to the number of women serving in the army. Hungary's army may be considered emancipated with its almost 20% female staffing, but there has never been a single female general in all its history. Slovakia does continue to heavily promote national efforts aimed at strengthening the role of women in society but with no specific milestones. There is a continuous effort from civil society activists to boost female representation that would match overall women's contribution to the public good.

Hopefully, this is only a question of time even though women's inclusion in the army is often confronted with strong social contempt fuelled by the idea of the traditional family model where their first duty is to raise children and care for their families. Let us all be reminded, both men and women care for their families, and it is from this affection and responsibility that security gains its importance. Moreover, security challenges are becoming increasingly hybrid, it is necessary to respond to them on every front. For women losing out on NATO is not an option.

The stories of female leaders in the field of security – which you will discover in this issue – assure us that there is still much to do in respect to increasing diversity in this sector. Beginning from more regular and habitual input from female-experts in international security programmes, through understanding that different competencies and brainpower bring better solutions as well as highlighting the importance of raising the next generations to be fully aware of equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities, all these elements require serious steps to be taken and personal investment from all groups of society. The goal for those working in security should be to work towards a world where men and women can stand next to each other, shoulder to shoulder, and face any obstacle together. /

#WomenAreNATO

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REACHING OUT

to the Underrepresented

Encouraging Peace Through the Soft Side of Security

CARMEN ROMERO

The key task for NATO's Public Diplomacy Division is to foster awareness and understanding of the alliance, its values, policies and activities, and to increase the level of debate on peace, security and defence related issues.

To this end, this division conducts and supports a wide range of public diplomacy activities, including conferences, seminars and other outreach projects designed to engage with audiences around the world. Currently, more effort is being put in to reach audiences that are not typically aware of NATO's campaigns, including young people, women and people with no university degree.

We spoke with Carmen Romero, who serves as the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Diplomacy Division at NATO, to see why women's voices are so important and what outreach initiatives are in operation.

How would you explain to women why NATO and security is their business?

I would like to tell women that security is important because without security we would not be able to live the lives that we do every single day.

This is because the security umbrella we have in place allows us to enjoy our economic prosperity. And therefore, we are able to go to school, to go to university, later we have a possibility to go for a master's, and then to be also in position to apply for jobs that we like.

One of the things I have discovered is that working in security institutions is fascinating because the security challenges continue to evolve and change and because the security environment is now much more challenging, which means that we are very busy, but we are able to show that we are adapting to the developing environment.

It is also important to show the soft face of security, and that is what we do in security area. For example, we work to help increase the presence of women in security forces, in security institutions, in the security architecture and structures.

I believe you were speaking to my colleague Clare Hutchinson [NATO Secretary General's Special Representative



for Women, Peace and Security (WPS)], and she has a very strong mandate to help us, to help NATO in building our defence capacity, our activities supporting partner nations in the Middle East and North Africa while keeping in mind the importance of the role of women in these areas.

As I mentioned before, it is important to highlight what we do in terms of the science for peace, proving how significant it is to have the soft side of security. This is an area that probably can attract more women, so security is not just about military.

Security is about policy and the military, and it is a fascinating area. At NATO, we try to make this organization more attractive to women. Since I work in public diplomacy – my division has supported our Recruitment Division, and we are using our recruitment processes to show that women have an important role at NATO.

For example, one of the things we have done recently is a video about bodyguards supporting the security of the Secretary General. We have shown in that video that we also want to attract more women to do that job as we lack females in our bodyguard teams.

We use our public communications to showcase the soft side of security and to explain to our public that everything NATO does is aimed at preventing – not creating – conflict. We also communicate our efforts to project stability in our neighbourhood because that will help us to be more secure.

It is true that we have made progress, we see more women in security institutions in NATO nations, but we do not have enough. We must continue to work together, and women should help each other in this process.

Indeed. Are you trying to develop this idea of engaging more women in national armies?

We are working with our member states to help them find ways to attract more women, but of course, this is a responsibility of the individual nations, and the only thing we can do is to encourage them.

But the fact is that we are seeing more and more female defence ministers as well as female security advisors to defence ministers in the NATO nations. Again, we do not have enough, and we need more.

However, there is an increased sensitivity from governments on that topic, and we are joining forces. For example, I understand now that the Canadian Defence Minister is going to work with the Spanish Defence Minister – both female ministers – on a project related to our mission in Iraq focused on advising the Iraqi security forces on how to attract and recruit more women in their armed forces.

Where our role is very important is in helping countries that are less developed also promote the role of women in the security structures and military forces.

In Poland, for example, only 6% of the soldiers are female though none have ever reached the rank of general in the contemporary army in Poland.

This is where I think we can use public communications. Because we can use the TV, the digital world or social media to show that this is not just a man's world – this is also a woman's world, and we can play a role in helping our civil society, our people, our public to understand that better.

I have not thought of that before, but this is also a very interesting area for me as a woman. One of the tools that we have at our disposal is public communications to explain the importance of security and to explain the importance of security forces and armed forces, and this is not a man's world anymore.

I am glad to hear that! So, what does this diversity give to NATO?

The diversity of women and men makes any advice to our leadership, to our Secretary General, richer. For the first time in NATO's history we have a female Deputy Secretary General, and I can tell you that it is not because you are a woman or a man, you must be very well-prepared and willing to work very hard.

I think women must work even more in the sense that women feel that to get there they must show that they are good. And it is true – maybe we must work more, maybe our professional life is more challenging because we also most of the time must deal with family lives as well.

But, all in all, any advice will be richer coming from both men and women as long as it is well informed. More gender diversity makes this organisation richer. This is also true in the case of governments or different institutions.

According to the World Bank, gender equality brings more stability and prosperity for countries. Do you think it is necessary to bring more women in the countries that are not as developed as the NATO community?

Absolutely! I think it is necessary to have women and men working together at all levels in any institution, to increase the level of diversity

One of the things that we also have at NATO – as we have 29 member-states – is not just gender equality but also diversity in terms of nations. We work with colleagues from the 28 other nations, and this also makes this organisation very rich.

We have different cultures, different experiences, and by working together, we are making this organization work more efficiently; our output is stronger and more robust.

We still have a lot of work to do, and from my little box in public diplomacy I am trying to do everything to promote the role of women and to attract the interest of women to apply for jobs in this organisation.

But it is also important to inform women in our member-states what NATO does. So, there are direct ways to reach women.

One of the things we are doing in the Public Diplomacy Division is that we have realised, based on opinion polls, that there are specific segments of the public in our member-states who know less or care less about what NATO is and does. Namely, this would be young people, women, and people who have no university degree. We are looking at the information channels that women in our member-states so as to explain to women what we all are doing here.

As you said at the beginning, women sometimes do not help each other enough; one of the things I do for my female colleagues who are applying for promotions or more senior positions is help them prepare. In NATO, you will only get a job based on your merits, not because you are a woman.

In the end, we have to work very hard, and I try to do that because I really believe in the strengths of women working with each other and helping each other. As you said, maybe we need to also work more on that and invest more on that together, so that women are NATO. Women make NATO stronger! /

Carmen Romero
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Public Diplomacy Division at NATO.

A meeting with *Rose Gottemoeller*

Visegrad Insight sat down to talk to the first ever
female NATO Deputy Secretary General

MAGDA JAKUBOWSKA

Arriving to NATO with slightly shaky legs, I was struck by the grandiosity and beauty of the new NATO HQ in Brussels, and equally surprised when I met the first Madame Deputy Secretary of NATO for an interview whose commanding presence was tempered by a welcoming posture.

Born in heartland of America, her interests in international security were awoken when, on a walk with her father, she saw the Russian satellite Sputnik in the sky. Space fascinated her from then on, but it was the space race which made her go deeper into the affairs of the cold war and which marked her later career path.

Mapping out Rose Gottemoeller's – the first female NATO Deputy Secretary General – trajectory in life as well as her successes in international security show one possible course for women to use as inspiration when breaking into the traditionally more masculine domains.

Gottemoeller seems at ease discussing why there are fewer women in such roles as hers and downplayed any discrimination she might have experienced, saying: "If you are a good expert, they tend to forget your sex in the course of the conversation."

Truthfully, her career was not that easy; in the 1960s, when she started on her path, the country and the world were going through a tumultuous period; however, the experience and knowledge garnered during this time must have given her the self-assurance and drive which has been notable throughout her career.

Understanding the strategic importance of the space race and cold war, Gottemoeller became fluent in Russian and then served as research fellow for Colonel Thomas W. Wolfe at RAND, focusing on arms control and international security.

From there, Gottemoeller's successive achievements include enviable positions for anyone working in security. She worked at the United States National Security Council and got appointed for the posts of Deputy Under Secretary of Energy for Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation and Assistant Secretary and Director for Nonproliferation and National Security at the U.S. Department of Energy, later serving nearly five years as the Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security at the U.S. Department of State.

As Under Secretary, Gottemoeller advised the Secretary of State on arms control, nonproliferation and political-military affairs. While acting in this role, she concurrently served as Assistant Secretary of State for the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification and Compliance where she was the chief U.S. negotiator of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) with the Russian Federation. Previously, Gottemoeller had led the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Moscow Centre. Her posts might be further enumerated, but these mentioned highlight the breadth of roles she has performed.

Succinctly, Gottemoeller is one of a relatively small number of women who have been successful in research posts

and aides to two U.S. Administrations – working for both Obama and Clinton.

Now, she has assumed a post that had never been filled by a woman before – she works as NATO's Deputy Secretary General. Prevailing over the universal obstacles which come with achieving such a position in addition to the added complexity and challenge of often being the only woman in a room filled with men in suits and uniforms is a remarkable task, especially when considering she did this during the turbulent geo-political setting of the last several decades. As an example, Gottemoeller was able to easily cope with her Russian partners when sitting at, apart from herself, a completely male-dominated table during the non-proliferation talks.

When I spoke to DSG Gottemoeller, I got the feeling she is not content with the fact that security matters are often covered predominantly by men, and NATO puts a lot of effort encouraging women's engagement, still the HQ is overwhelming filled with men. That being said, DSG Gottemoeller has reiterated on numerous occasions that she is not satisfied with the status quo and would like to see more women involved in these high-level discussions and negotiations.

When asked why more women are needed, her answer was again short and balanced if not refreshingly clear, "Because women bring good solutions and pragmatism."

Gottemoeller has been an important voice supporting the empowerment of women and women's equal presence in all her roles. During our discussion, she underlined the importance of the #MeToo movement and many different informative and role-model initiatives that she happily supports as well as certain policies that support greater gender balance, such as one in California that mandates corporations to include women on their boards of directors.

But Gottemoeller went further to state that it is the men who are responsible for engaging more women into public positions, and it is in their highest interest to have them there! It is important that women advocate for other women, but change will come when men also do the same and recognize that a team only wins when they bring all their talent to bear – not leaving half of them on the bench. /

Countering Radicalisation & Soft Security

Security and defence used to be a man's world

ELŻBIETA BIENKOWSKA

There's more to defence and security than charging the enemy or tackling a violent offender. The complex threats we face and the multifaceted response they require have created roles for women both, in the front line and in developing the systems and technology to combat them.

If you are looking for evidence that women are taking more prominent roles, then you only have to look at the numerous defence ministers who are women (Florance Parly in France, Ursula Von der Leyen in Germany, Margarita Robles in Spain, Elisabetta Trenta in Italy and Ank Bijleveld in the Netherlands). At the EU level, there is my colleague Federica Mogherini and me. Together we have taken the lead in establishing the new European defence agenda.

In particular, I proposed the new €13 billion European Defence Fund, which will help Europe to develop its own defence capabilities and ensure its strategic autonomy. Moreover, we have developed the Commission's proposals for defence funding over the next seven years. At the operational level, one of the two managers responsible for our defence programme is a woman.

Nonetheless, the perception is still very much that defence and security is the domain of men. However, this is simply not the case. The military services have long recognised the important contribution women make in operations and leadership.

It's more than 40 years since NATO set up the Committee on Women in the NATO Forces. The complementary skills of both men and women are essential for the effectiveness of the armed forces. Moreover, much of our security will depend on analysing new threats and dangers that we might not even suspect exist.

Women's skills are badly needed in understanding the hidden dangers that can undermine society and designing counter-measures. For example, experts are beginning to appreciate the importance of "softer measures" to counter radicalisation where women can play an important role.

Today there are women in the defence industry, but they are mostly to be found in the jobs that are not defence specific, such as HR or finance. On the engineering side, women's skills are largely untapped. This is symptomatic of a general underrepresentation of women

in science and technology. Of course, this concerns not only the defence industry, but the whole EU industry in general.

We are continuing to encourage more women into science and technology, for example through the Women Innovators Award or support to female entrepreneurship, facilitating networking among entrepreneurs and support organisations and access to finance.

The European Commission, under this mandate, has set the EU in a new direction to guarantee security for all Europeans. To achieve this, we are working very closely with NATO.

This is not contradictory to NATO. On the contrary, a stronger European defence means ultimately a stronger NATO. We want to strengthen the NATO alliance, which has defended our freedom for nearly 70 years. This is why the EU is taking more responsibility on the world stage and needs to develop its own capacities. And to do this we must call on the talents of Europe's women, as well.

The EU project is built on solidarity and equality. As the EU develops its role as a security provider, this concept of equality will manifest itself. We have seen over the last century the dynamic contribution that women can make in all aspects of commerce, industry and society as a whole. Defence and security are no different. The challenge for us all today is to make sure we use this potential. /

A quick look through military history doesn't reveal many women's names, but things are changing.

The author is a European Commissioner for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (2014 – present), and previously, the Polish Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Infrastructure and Development 2013–2014.

THE NECESSITY OF **HAVING WOMEN**

Visegrad Insight met with Major General Kristin Lund of Norway, who is the Head of Mission and Chief of Staff of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO). MGen Lund explained the importance of peacekeeping missions and women's engagement for the sustainability of peace processes as well as her career path in the Norwegian Army, her professional struggles and successes and the significance of good leadership.

In Poland, there are no female generals in the army; I hope that the Norwegian example will encourage us to have more women in security. Specifically, what are the main peacekeeping missions you carry out? And why do you think that women's presence is so important in such missions?

Of course, all the information about the missions can be found on our webpage with exact numbers and names, but to put it in a simple way and to make it more understandable for people not knowledgeable with military issues – it is all about monitoring ceasefire agreements that Israel has with its neighbours. This is done by having two observing groups: one in the south of Lebanon, supporting UNIFIL, and another group supporting UNDOF in the Golan Heights.

Our people support the two UN missions mentioned above in fulfilling their mandates. In addition to that, I also have a mandate to liaise with all the capitals in these five countries. We have offices set up for this purpose in Cairo, Beirut and Damascus. The one from Jordan is in Jerusalem where the headquarters is located. More or less half of my time is spent travelling between these capitals and talking to the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and other important interlocutors.

In the countries you just mentioned, the role of women in society is a bit different in comparison to the one we have in Europe.

For me, as the leader of this operation, this is a very important topic. I ask all those countries who contribute with military personnel to send female observers, as one of our primary focuses is specifically the situation of women in the region. By examining the Gender Gap List, produced annually by the World Economic Forum, it is apparent that the Middle East region, where I work, has slipped far behind the rest of the developed nations in this regard.

Another significant point is the rights of women. It is important to show that the UN has equal views on the resources that the UN provides to its missions. Moreover, 50%

of the global population is female, so it is vital for me to reach out during my tenure as Head of Mission for UNTSO. The availability of female observers increases our interaction with the local population, and subsequently increases accessibility to information.

There have been studies saying that the presence of women in peacekeeping missions helps to sustain peace. They state that in cases like yours in the Middle East, peace is sustained for 60% longer when women are engaged in the process.

True, and the research speaks for itself why it is so important. Then again, whenever I am out on these regional meetings, I try to raise questions concerning gender as well as attend workshops where we bring all these issues to the table.

I am also a part of the Nordic Women Mediators Network which is based on regional cooperation – there is one in the Mediterranean region, in Africa and throughout the British Commonwealth. We have started to identify women with expertise not only on issues related to gender, but with expertise within all nation building aspects, and with the added female dimension. Thus, it is vital to include the whole society in such a process.

Today, we have a Secretary-General who has done a lot and has been a role model of a leader, for women and men alike. Within one year, he has been able to get parity within the UN headquarters when it comes to management, and we are on our way to achieving parity in other areas.

Of course, the biggest issue and challenge within peacekeeping operations is found in the military sector, as this constitutes the largest part of this department. This is why we continuously appeal to the troop-contributing countries to provide us with more female military personnel.

We see that where we deploy both genders – we get a much better result. It is more effective because you are able to reach out to 100% of the population, so your potential interaction is much more diverse and comprehensive.

IN THE PEACE PROCESS

Personally, I have acquired experience as a pioneer female officer in several operations, including the first Gulf War and in Afghanistan. I fully believe this has facilitated my access to both genders. In comparison, extensive experience emphasizes how men in uniform rarely are able to access the female half of the populations in religious countries. In order to fulfil one's mandate, access to both genders is critical.

You have served in the Norwegian military for years, and you are the first woman to have such a high position as general. Overall, I would say that Norwegian Army is very progressive as there is compulsory military service for women. In addition, women are recruited into the Special Forces. What was the spark behind this phenomenon?

Our Special Forces experienced the operational necessity of having female colleagues in their units. The capacity of the Special Forces was assessed to increase with both males and females represented. This awareness, and also the compulsory military service for both genders, has over recent years considerably increased the female ration of the Norwegian armed forces.

However, talking about the officer level, women still only constitute about 12%, which is too low. However, the percentage of female soldiers in basic training has reached 25–30%. The ratio is unevenly distributed, however; for instance, it is lower in the army due to their stricter requirements for physical skills.

It is more than 25 years ago when we got our first female submarine commander, and 34 years since all branches were eligible for females. Today there are no limitations.

Norway also categorizes positions with different fixed physical standards. By observing any sports arena today, one can easily observe how many women are in great shape. Increased participation in sports – many which have been typically associated with men – are producing women with better physical preconditions for the challenges of military service.



Major General Kristin LUND Head of Mission/Chief of Staff UNTSO

Since joining the Norwegian Army in 1979, Major General Lund has had a distinguished military career, with wide-ranging command and staff experience at both national and international levels, including as the Deputy Commander of the Norwegian Army Forces Command. In 2009, she was the Norwegian Army's first female officer to be promoted to the rank of Major General, and was subsequently appointed as Chief of Staff of the Norwegian Home Guard. From August 2014 to July 2016, Major General Lund served as Force Commander of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), becoming the first woman to serve as Force Commander in a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

Her previous assignments with the United Nations include deployment to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) in 1986 and the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) from 1992–1993 and 1994–1995. In 1998–1999 she was a battalion Commander in the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR) in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Major General Lund also has extensive experience in multinational operations, including deployment to Saudi Arabia during Operation Desert Storm in 1991 and at the Headquarters of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan in 2003–2004. Major General Lund has been a member of the Nordic Women Mediation Network since 2015. She currently serves as an advisor at the Norwegian Defence University College in Oslo. In 2017, she became a UNWOMEN Champion.

Born in 1958, Major General Lund graduated from the Norwegian Defence Command and Staff College, the Norwegian Defence University College, and the United States Army War College where she obtained a Master of Strategic Studies.

In Norway there is a saying, “we need good heads – most other things can be trained”. Your mentality and attitude have to be well suited from the start; without this, training alone might not be sufficient.

I have been talking to many female representatives already, and I have noticed that all of you have the same problem – being alone among many men.

From your experience, what types of character do you see as important to have for such position? What would you advise other women to do in such situations?

Thinking back, I often experienced that the only woman in a male crowd would become a mascot. Men tended to address us using only our first name, while our male counterparts would be addressed with the more traditionally used rank or surname. And that is not good either.

Personally, I have always been lucky to have good people around me who are ready to fight for you when you are not in the room, who have a clear perspective and can see the benefit diversity has to offer.

If you find such kind of people among your male colleagues, you can get support from them. The best thing is to perform your job well; as long as you do this, you will be accepted. But I have been through the whole range, including where I have had to work twice as hard as my male colleagues in order to be recognized.

What we also have in Norway is a network for female officers which has become a great support system. Therefore, I always try to recommend creating a network because then you can at least have a forum where you let out frustration and to learn from others based on what they have been doing. That is my best advice.

Again, looking back, civilian women working in the military have also had a hard time, sometimes even harder, with regards to, for instance, sexual harassment. The most important thing to understand is that everything starts from the top. The leadership of organisations needs the awareness that in order to fulfil your task and mandate, both genders need to be fully empowered and employed. This is not about political correctness.

It is like connecting dots of each country or international organisation working for the benefit of gender, that is not only the army itself but all the policies together treating gender as an important issue...

Yes. For instance, there are always questions about gender during our interviews. For instance, interviewees are being asked to give an example when gender played a role or how can they relate to it. It can tell you a lot about their experience of working with women or their attitude towards women.

I wonder in what sense the UN is working to advance all these gender issues or bringing more women into what you do in the UN? Are there any other actions, resolutions that can help?

The Secretary General touches upon the element of gender in most of his speeches.

There are a lot of actions going on. One of the seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is specifically related to the promotion of equality and women empowerment.

For example, the policy of parity is pushed with greater force in the UN than in NATO. So, I would say that the UN has come quite far in this. They also have a pipeline for women; a way for UN women to come and meet women from other divisions. This is also an arena for where young women may be actively encouraged to seek positions within the UN.

The UN women also have “champions”, and I am one of them. However, what we would need, are more men that are champions for women.

As long as everybody is given recruitment opportunities, the situation will improve; if you are underrepresented, you have to find women and see if they match. And from 2019, we will be measured on how we are able to fulfil – on the civilian side of the house – all these tasks concerning parity. We need to encourage more qualified women to be apply and be admitted into the rosters.

I am very appreciative for having a Secretary General who pushes this initiative. He has taken leadership of the issue, and everybody knows that the best practice is achieved though leadership at all levels.

This reminds me of when I was a force commander in Cyprus. We had been meeting both political, military and police delegations coming from the various contributing nations.

Some of our top – the first or second points – were always about gender. We put it front-and-centre to increase the pressure. During our time there, we were able to get an increase of 7% females in the military, and 25% in the UN Police. This shows that by just mentioning it, pressure and output is increased.

For me, being a female, this is natural because I have been fighting my whole life to get where I am today. And I think this is another important issue that we, as women, need to support each other and empower other women. There are a lot of women who forget, once they themselves enter into positions of power, to keep on supporting or empowering other women.

The encouragement and promotion of suitable female candidates is something we need to learn from men and their network. They will call up candidates and let them know that “there is a position, and you should go for this one”.

This is what I thought about UN champions. Having you and other women would be supportive for others. Would you tell me some more about UN women champions? What is it about?

I think there are around fourteen of them, give or take. What we are trying to do is wherever we go and deliver speeches or trainings, we will always mention the need of and promote gender in our operations.

In a way, we are talking about what the UN is doing, what in a way we expect that can be done from the interlocutors. It is not more than that but I will use all occasions to promote the active presence of females in operations. Having my CV state that I am a Women UN Champion is a way of sending out this message. /

AN ALLIANCE OF EQUALS



Born in Bucharest, Romania, during the times of communism and the Securitate, Oana Lungescu became the spokesperson of NATO in 2010. Earlier she had a vast journalistic career with the BBC service in Romania and later BBC World, though she began as English teacher in a small mountain town in central Romania.

It has been scientifically proven that women's involvement in peace processes allows for better conflict resolution, better understanding of women's needs, especially for those who have been the victims of different conflicts. What are the other roles that you see women have in security? You have mentioned that there are positions for women in all aspects of what NATO or the UN does, but what exact examples could you mention?

I see women in all possible roles. I do not think that there are roles just for men and roles just for women.

The nations in NATO come from different traditions, but we all are going in the same direction – both, in terms of our armed forces and in terms of our political representation: we have nine women-ambassadors around the table representing 29 allies; we have quite a few defence ministers who are women, or we have heads of states and governments who are women. The sky is the limit!

So, of course, the role of women in conflict resolution is important. Women are very often seen or portrayed as the victims, and women and children are, of course, primarily the victims of any conflict.

However, to make peace not only possible but sustainable it is important to have everybody on board; no society can afford to just push away half of the population because they are women.

We know that only with women at the table, and only with women's voices heard, can peace be sustainable.

That is very important, and we, at NATO, make women increasingly represented in our operations. I think we now have 12% women in NATO missions and operations – serving not only as gender advisers, even though that is very important role, for instance in places like Afghanistan.

The presence of women was important during our combat mission in Afghanistan because local women would not talk to our male-gender advisers seeking information. For example, if women were saying they were not going to the market on a given day because they felt something might be happening, then gender advisers or female officers can raise an alarm and get the intelligence from the locals.

So, I think women's presence is important also in an operational sense – not just because we want everybody to be equal, which of course we do, but it also has its own benefits. It is not just the right thing to do – it is the smart thing to do for all of us!

Recently, we have held a large exercise – the Trident Juncture – which was our biggest exercise since the end of the Cold War. We had some fantastic digital materials to communicate about the exercise, and amazingly I have discovered that there were a lot of women in a wide range of positions involved!

So, I did a series of tweets with the hashtag #womenatwork which got a lot of interest (impressions) from outside the NATO bubble because we do tend to communicate among ourselves, but it is also important to reach out to others and to show that “yes, we can have women pilots, engineers, or tank-commanders, etc.”

What moved my heart, was to realise that there were a lot of women from many different nations making a very important contribution to an important exercise!

You mentioned in another meeting that your previous work was engaged in international affairs and, therefore, in security issues. To you, this was obvious that international affairs means security, but to others the connection is less clear. I also see security as the mother of everything else in foreign affairs as most of the decisions are taken considering security aspects.

Why do you feel security is important? Why do you think it is inevitable to know basic security issues?

I fully agree with you that security is fundamental. Without security and without peace, we can have no prosperity, we can have no development. If there is no security, there can be nothing else, or nothing that we would want for our societies. But of course, very often it is easy to take peace for granted.

Especially, after the period of 70 years where most of countries in Europe have forgotten to a large extent what conflict can mean, and they often see conflict as something that is very far away.

The reality is that even far away conflicts, like Afghanistan or Syria, impact our security here at home. That is why NATO has been in Afghanistan – because Afghanistan served in a large part to organise the 9/11 attacks on the United States where so many citizens, from so many countries, including Poland, lost their lives. I remember going to the memorial and seeing the names of Poles that along with so many people from so many other countries were there.

That is why it is important for us to continue to be there with a new training missions, to train Afghan Security Forces, to ensure that they create the conditions for peace and reconciliation, so that we can never see again that sort of attack planned on Afghan soil.

There is a similar situation in Iraq. It is important that NATO is now launching a new training mission in Iraq starting in 2019 and will build on the existing training that we have done with the Iraqi forces to help ensure ISIS/Daesh does not retain a foothold in Iraq or Syria. Because we know the barbaric treatment of women – and not just women – at the hands of Daesh.

So, that is why it is important that all of us contribute to these conflicts. In the end, it is about our own security.

Any turmoil in our neighbourhood, whether it is Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria, the Middle East or North Africa, can create a fertile ground for terrorism on our own soil, can trigger attacks and, indeed, can also lead to refugee and migrant crises which we have already seen in Europe.

Therefore, we need to help deal with the roots of these crises and conflicts where they appear – and that is when NATO steps in! It is about defending and keeping ourselves safe here at home, but also helping keep our neighbours stable because that contributes to our own security.

Ukraine was an eye-opening situation for the West due to its sheer proximity. What is the attitude of NATO towards the war in Ukraine?

Ukraine is a very important partner to NATO, and it has been for many years. It is a partner that has also taken part in many NATO missions and operations. We have very close long-standing relations with Ukraine.

NATO remains fully committed to Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty which was also reconfirmed and made clear at the July Summit of NATO leaders.

What we have seen is Russia tearing up the rule book – and not for the first time – basically changing borders by force; this time it is through the illegal annexation of Crimea and the continued destabilisation of Eastern Ukraine.

NATO continues to stand with Ukraine and we support Ukraine both through political dialogue but also through practical cooperation. We have an office in Kiev and provide support to Ukraine through a range of different trust funds and activities; for instance, by supporting their cyber-defence capabilities, by helping rehabilitate the wounded personnel and helping their transition from military to civilian life, and also helping with the ongoing reforms of the defence and security forces.

Imagine you were to sit down to dinner with a family somewhere far away like in Bucharest, or if you came to my home – please feel invited! – and you can meet my sister and her five daughters, how would you explain to them that 2% GDP defence spending is important?

We all realise that the world around us, the world we live in, has become more dangerous and much more unpredictable.

We saw that with the illegal annexation of Crimea, with a continued destabilization of Eastern Ukraine, but also with rise of Daesh, practically at the same time with an increasing number and sophistication of cyber-attacks, with the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, etc.

We have seen attacks with chemical weapons – not just in Syria, but also a nerve-agent used on the streets in Salisbury, in Europe. We see programs of nuclear weapons – whether it is North Korea, Iran or others.

So, I think we see a world which is very complicated, and it is of the utmost importance that we maintain our security because we certainly should not take it for granted. Yet, sometimes we can see how easy it is for that world to get spoiled, for dangerous things to happen, and how many risks there are.

It is crucial that we are in a position of strength – weakness can only invite aggression. What NATO has been doing throughout the 70 years of its history – and wants to continue doing – is show a strength and readiness for anything that might happen.

To do that, to stay strong, all of us must invest in our own defence. It is an insurance policy – you must pay a premium for your insurance policy in advance, and in a way, you could say that the premium has gone up, but the NATO premium has practically always been 2% of GDP though it was first officially adopted in 2014.

It is significant that it happened in 2014 because it came after Russia's illegal actions in Ukraine, when we really had to be more serious about our own defence and security. If we are not, we cannot expect others to defend us.

So, this is a promise that we have made to each other. Poland has been very successful in its investment not just in capability but also in readiness and exercises. For instance, we have just seen an exercise “Anaconda” which has been completed in Poland.

Maintaining security is, of course, an ongoing process where we all need to be strong and be confident. Then we can all be in positions to have a dialogue with Russia not from the position of weakness but from position of strength.

NATO's approach towards Russia is both to strong defensive capabilities as well as an openness to dialogue because of course Russia is not going away, so we need to manage the relationship we have with them, even though it is hard to anticipate right now whether we can improve that relation.

So, the insurance policy is for everything in life. You do need an insurance policy and it will not come for free. But the benefits at the end will be much bigger – like preventing a fire from happening, making sure that you have everything to ensure that you are safe.

You have mentioned the 70th anniversary of NATO in 2019. What is the plan for this year?

I think it is an important point in NATO's history, but I think we also need to show that NATO is more than its history. We all know that, yet it is important to show the projects that we have right now, what we are doing to continue to adapt NATO to a changing world.

This won't be us resting on our seats and talking a lot about how wonderful we have been in the last 70 years, but it is an opportunity to focus primarily on what we are doing now and what we intend to do in the future to keep NATO flexible and ready to deal with the unexpected.

Whatever it is, we can all expect the unexpected, and it is important to remind people that we are safe because of nato, because of us standing together as a family of nations, and that we have been able to maintain peace and we continue to work for peace by standing together.

This is an alliance where we all work together, where the voice of Poland is as important as the voice of the United States, or as the voice of Germany, the UK, Montenegro: an alliance of equals.

Everybody's contribution is important, and, when things get tough – you know that you can always count on your allies to be there for you. /

Delivering the “**Women, Peace and Security**” *Agenda*

The UN fails to make good on women's security despite the apparent success of a resolution passed 18 years ago

KERRY LONGHURST

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSR1325) from 2000 promised to bring about a paradigm shift in thinking about women's position and role in the world.

It was and still remains a cornerstone and reference point for policy development and academic debates about women's role in peace and security issues. Moreover, it provided an underpinning for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and in particular SDG 5, which sets out gender equality and empowerment of all women as critical global goals.

At the forefront of the resolution was the recognition that women had a specific role and place in peace and security and that this necessitated a strategic response.

The 1990's had brought into clear view the fact that women and girls were disproportionately affected by conflicts in distinct and profound ways and that

existing norms, procedures and approaches to conflict were failing to take account of this.

With the absence of a systematic framework to ensure a gender perspective, it was also the case that women were vastly underrepresented in key decision-making positions relating to security.

Of the many notable features of UNSR1325, what stands out in retrospect are its holistic and normative ambitions, pertaining to bring about something more than a simple change of lens. Crucially, UNSR1325 posited that gender be at the core of thinking and planning; it posed that women had a vital role to play in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and crises, peace negotiations, peacekeeping, humanitarian responses and also post-conflict reconstruction efforts.

The resolution also provided a focal point for states and other actors to take

measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, rape and other kinds of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict.

The Continued Salience of UNSR1325

Measuring the success of such an ambitious agenda is no easy task as it implies transformation and remains a work in progress.

Having said this, from the vantage point of 2019, all evidence suggests that countries and societies are more peaceful and enjoy higher degrees of well-being and prosperity when women have full and equal rights and opportunities.

This claim is backed by a recent report on gender equality and stability

produced by the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security and PRIO, which confirmed a strong linkage between overall societal well-being and the empowerment of women in a country's political and economic life.

Such findings buttress all existing evidence that the full involvement of women is an essential ingredient to sustainable development and conflict resolution. The same research also confirmed that states and societies suffer from a fundamental lack of stability when women face restrictions in their personal security and are excluded from political life.

This all surely confirms the importance and continued relevance of UNSR1325 and that more gender equality serves up resilience via peace and prosperity.

But, With Limited Effectiveness

If we take instances of sexual violence in conflict zones as the most important indicator of success, it appears that UNSR1325 has had limited effects.

From the vantage point of 2019 it is evident that women remain vulnerable to sexual violence in warzones and also in post-conflict settlement contexts.

Moreover, UN reporting frequently confirms that sexual violence has gained a more "systematic" character in the form of official "ordered acts" often in ways quite different from "opportunistic and retaliatory" attacks and rapes in previous conflicts.

Analysts have compared conflicts in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda and found that occurrences of sexual violence are actually higher in the former, despite the implementation of a host of UN initiatives.

Evidence also shows that numbers of women that have been displaced as a result of war and conflict are not abating. Moreover, displaced women and girls are often subject to sexual violence after being displaced or in the process of them being forcibly displaced.

Fundamental Challenges

Commentators suggest that the effectiveness of UNSR1325 is diminished due to its rather superficial approach to gender.

More specifically, that the resolution does not attempt to confront the actual systemic issues and background factors that make women and girls the most susceptible to becoming victims of conflicts.

Accordingly, analysts have long pointed out that women are more likely than men to become victims because poverty, lack of access to education and, in many cases, prevailing cultural norms which disempower women.

The effectiveness of UNSR1325 is also challenged by its apparent "add women and stir" approach. The point being made here is that the involvement of women is not fulsome or ambitious enough.

Critics suggest that even in a post-UNSR1325 scenario women are not taking part in determining the parameters and building the foundations of debates. Instead the situation persists whereby women are simply co-opted into existing structures and obliged to accept dominant discourses.

The "add women and stir" approach also seems evident in UNSR1325's assumption that an increase in the numbers of women involved in conflict resolution efforts will be an instant panacea against the ill-treatment of women and girls.

Critics argue that such an approach actually serves to reinforce traditional notions of women as victims and/or as being conflict-adverse – in line with traditional gender stereotypes and is therefore unhelpful.

This is palpably the case, since UNSR1325 does indeed tend not to grasp that gender issues are more than just being about women. A more rounded and arguably more effective resolution would have a grasp of gender as also being about problematic issues assigned to men and masculinity in relation to conflict and war.

Crucially, by taking a limited view on gender, UNSR1325 does not create pathways for fundamentally reconceiving the role of women (and men) in peace and security.

Aside from the points made above, limitations to effectiveness also derive from enforcement issues. As a resolution, UNSR1325 lacks teeth, a capacity for exacting punitive measures and essentially only offers up guidelines. As such, it leaves the structures and systems of war unchallenged and largely intact.

Interestingly, as of November 2018, just over 40% of UN Member States have created National Action Plans for UNSR1325. Whilst progress should always be applauded, it also needs to be asked why have the remaining 60% of UN states not yet achieved this?

Moreover, even when a National Action Plan has been created many remain largely skeletal as no additional finance is provided for actual implementation. The value and impact of National Action Plans for 1325 is also cast in doubt in some cases due to the fact that some national governments do not have in place methods and procedures with which to evaluate and review their plans in terms of effectiveness and impact.

In lieu of a conclusion, all evidence shows that the empowerment of women is crucial for the well-being and prosperity of a society. Women's unencumbered involvement in political and economic life enables human systems to thrive and to become resilient.

The women, peace and security project is an essential element in this terrain. Whilst UNSR1325 remains fundamental, the short discussion posted above demonstrates that there are numerous structural and conceptual weaknesses, as that will continue to limit its effectiveness and impact. /

Kerry Longhurst is a professor and author with a PhD in International Relations from the University of Birmingham, UK and an MSc in Strategic Studies from the University of Wales.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Switzerland's
Foreign Policy
seeks excellence
in promoting
talent – from
women and men



A discussion with State Secretary Pascale Baeriswyl

What does female leadership in Switzerland look like? In Swiss politics and army, how is diversity perceived?

Let me start with the positive facts: On 5 December 2018, our National Assembly, for the first time in history, elected two new female Federal Counsellors at once, which means that as of 2019 our government counts 3 women and 4 men.

In the two chambers of the Federal Parliament, women represent 33% of the National Council and 15% of the Council of States (2018). So, there is still some way to go and an alliance of women's organisations, including many female groups of the political parties, is currently encouraging women to run for election in autumn 2019.

With regard to the army, the good news is that one of the newly elected ministers is heading – again for the first time in Swiss history – the Federal Department for Defense since January 1st of this year.

In the armed forces, the picture is not yet convincing since only 0.7% are female. This is mostly due to the fact that the military service is only mandatory for men.

What was your career path? Did you have any female role-models or specific obstacles you had to face?

With regard to female careers, there is no magic trick, but maybe some magic words: wonderful role models and networking, networking, networking and – maybe with a less magic – patience, very hard work and a pinch of luck!

With regard to the obstacles, they range – unsurprisingly – from the challenge of combining family and career to the still very male-oriented understanding of power in a traditionally male profession like diplomacy.

Strong logistical and moral support from family and friends is also needed as well as the courage to leave your comfort zone and to bear setbacks.

What gave you courage? What would be your advice for women who want to make their careers in foreign affairs and international security?

The numerous courageous people I had the great privilege to meet, and who achieved something special, in every corner of the world and at every level of society, ranging from my grandma – who, while living in a small village, hid Jewish children during the Second World War – to women who reached top positions thanks to their excellence like IMF President Christine Lagarde or the former President of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, to people like the Nobel Peace Prize winner of 2018, Denis Mukwege, who has been treating so many female victims of sexual violence.

My advice is to have the courage to take risks in order to change things every now and then.

Commit to the occupation you have a passion for, but don't be afraid of change, failure and setbacks. The most important thing is probably to understand that there is not "ONE path", since the definition of what a career really is not only your personal choice, but also depends on what you make of it.

And over a lifetime, our priorities change. So, the magic word here probably is flexibility: Take the chance that presents itself!

What encourages women to take over political leadership? How important is it for women to be engaged in Foreign Affairs?

It is paramount that women are actively engaged in foreign affairs, including in decision-making functions since any sector of public life in a democratic political system should represent

the population accordingly. In diplomacy, we still have some improvements to achieve.

In 2018, we had 34% women in the diplomatic service, and only 20% of the Swiss ambassadors were women, but things are getting better.

In our competitive recruitment process, we can ensure gender parity in the meantime, and as of summer 2019 we will, for the first time, nearly achieve parity in the top-level positions in the capital.

We also have an association for Swiss female diplomats working on issues related to gender-equality in the diplomatic service: fostering networks and mentoring, promoting part-time and job-sharing working-models.

I believe more and more men do appreciate the role of cooperation with women and their different attitude and points of view...

It is well known that mixed teams get better results. This is true in all fields, whether business, politics, security or diplomacy.

Even if more men across the world have recently become "gender champions" and promote gender equality and women's representation, there is a need to encourage all generations, to be more active – and serious – on that topic. Gender-equality is a question of partnership between women and men – and we should adapt the narrative so that men feel concerned as allies, not as potential "losers".

What are the priorities for Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in terms of woman engagement and the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325? What are the successes or best practices of the National Action Plan?

Switzerland was a pioneer with regard to the implementation of UNSR 1325 and has recently adopted its 4th national action plan on Women, Peace and Security. Its thematic priorities are: effective involvement of women in conflict prevention; women's participation in conflict resolution and peace processes; protection against sexual and gender-based violence in conflict; women's participation in peace missions and security policy.

In the past, we have successfully supported transitional justice processes such as, for example, in the Philippines where Switzerland co-chaired the truth and reconciliation commission that produced over 90 gender-relevant recommendations.

From 2019 on, Switzerland, as a member of the Partnership for Peace will support the work of the NATO

Secretary General's special representative on women, peace and security and her new "Human Security Unit" with a seconded officer.

What is the advancement in gender equality and women's empowerment in the private sector, especially with regard to new technologies, in Switzerland?

Efforts are underway to encourage more women and girls to choose technical studies (MINT studies) by making them more attractive for women.

The private sector is a key stakeholder to strengthen women's positions, in particular with regard to ensuring equal pay for work of equal value and their representation in top decision-making positions.

Awareness is still lagging behind but – thanks to some very committed women and men in top positions of the private sector – continuously growing.

Are there special aspects in Switzerland's policies enhancing gender equality?

Women's political rights were accepted late in Switzerland – the right to vote at the national level was introduced only in 1971.

This is certainly an important reason why a strong women's movement helped introduce a solid legal framework; since 1981, the Swiss Constitution stipulates in art. 8 equal rights for men and women, mainly in the workplace and in the family.

In 1995, the Equality Law was established with a focus on gender equality in the workplace.

A key area of action of the Federal Office for Gender Equality is addressing the gender pay gap. The law was recently amended to make it mandatory for companies with more than 100 employees to conduct a check of their pay practice.

In foreign politics, Switzerland developed a Strategy on Gender equality and Women's rights, which focuses on strengthening women's economic empowerment and effective participation, combatting all forms of gender-based violence and promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights.

What is Switzerland's motivation for these targeted measures?

Switzerland is a country which worships excellence. This is a tough choice, and in order to be excellent, you have to make use of all your talent – from men and women.

Equal rights for women and men is therefore a mandate driven by our Federal Constitution. Fostering women's rights and gender equality means contributing to excellence, creating a fairer, more responsible society that has deeper respect for diversity. This is also what we promote at FDFA in our foreign policy. /

SIX STRIKING FACTS

Switzerland's contribution to security in Europe and the world

GLOBAL

1 **Switzerland is a credible broker between conflicting parties due to its neutrality and its history.** Thus, Switzerland is often involved in mediation and dialogue efforts and helps to reach agreements to end wars and violence.

2 **Switzerland engages constructively in international organisations,** like the UN, OSCE (Chairmanship 2014, FSC Chairmanship 1st trimester 2019), as well as in the NATO Partnership for Peace. This is a recognition that Switzerland's security is linked to the security of other states and that of the entire European region.

3 **Switzerland champions Human Rights and the rules-based international order,** also in traditional security topics where both face increasing pressure, for instance in countering terrorism. Ensuring the rule of law and the respect for human rights is often one of the first steps towards more security.

4 **Switzerland is host to a range of international organizations,** including for instance the ICRC, the WHO, the WTO and a large number of NGOs.

EUROPE

5 **Switzerland supports activities of the OSCE** and helps find sustainable solutions for pressing questions of European Security (e.g. through seconding staff to the Special Monitoring Mission SMM) and NATO through the Partnership for Peace (e.g. destruction of old ammunition and weapons in the Western Balkans).

6 **Switzerland supports other States.** This includes offering its good offices or supporting reform processes towards more democracy by sharing its own experiences and know-how. On the operations level, activities include the destruction of surplus weapons and ammunition, and Swiss contributions to peace operations, for example in Kosovo with the KFOR mission.



SECURITY LINKS TO GEOGRAPHY

Kyllike Sillaste-Elling,
Permanent Representative
of Estonia to NATO

Active NATO membership is a long-term strategic priority of Estonian security and defence policy (being a member since March 29th, 2004), which allows the country to productively participate in international security cooperation and to safeguard Estonia's own security. The international security environment has changed considerably over the past several years. This has resulted in the expansion of the concept of security to new areas such as terrorism, energy and cyber security, etc. Therefore, the requirements for ensuring security are changing over time for both NATO and Estonia.

We spoke to Estonia's NATO Representative, Kyllike Sillaste-Elling, who elaborates on how security is important to her country and what is the phenomena of gender equality in security policy in Estonia.

In Estonia, the representation of female leaders engaged in politics, including the President – Kersti Kaljulaid, is quite high which is not the normal case in Eastern or Central Europe, though the pay gap is still quite large. What has caused these phenomena?

In Estonia, women are highly educated. I am not sure about the latest statistics but, in general, more and more women in Estonia are attending and pursuing careers at higher education institutions. There are more women than men getting higher education.

In addition, we have more women than men working for the foreign service; however, it doesn't necessarily mean that we have more female ambassadors, but we do have quite a few. There have been considerable changes recently though – ten years ago, the situation was quite different.

In Poland, around 10–15% are female ambassadors, but we have the first U.S. female ambassador to Poland in Warsaw now.

I think for Estonia it is about 30-40% which is pretty good. There is also good representation in NATO with a 9-women strong group, which had never been the case before.

And, by the way, the United States Ambassador here is also a woman, as well as her deputy who left last year. Personally, I also have a deputy female colleague. I think it is quite important.

Why do you think it is important? Should NATO be more open to women?

Certainly, it should be! We do cooperate closely within the Central-Eastern European alliance because there is so much of security linked to geography. In our case – geography is the only thing we cannot change. So, we are stuck where we are in the East, close to Russia. It means in this group we [the Central-Eastern European countries] naturally must work together.

From one hand, women should be more engaged in NATO and bring more attention to the public. I feel more encouraged seeing other women discussing security topics, which means it is important to the female part of society. What else can women bring to security? How important is it for women to be engaged in foreign affairs?

For Estonia, security is very important. But why should it be an absolute priority for women when men don't let them participate in it, contribute to it?

This is a sort behaviour minimizing your chances of success because society also includes women. Once you decide to cut-off a part of society, due to whatever traditional beliefs are, then you lose out on capitalising from all your resources.

My mission is also to make sure that we never have to use all the capacity that we are building up, and sometimes I feel that my male colleagues do not perceive it in the same way. That's why I think every diplomat's job in Estonia should be to make sure that we don't need to use all of our military capacity. It's necessary for deterrents to be prepared, but we don't need to use all of them. That's how I see it.

Generally, in your opinion, is there a good understanding of security issues among women in Estonia? In Poland, for example, women treat the security sector like "toys for boys" as they do not really care about the topic and prefer to leave it to men.

Well, I don't see security as a totally separate issue. Sometimes it's just a tendency to put it separately. People who secure the policy are mostly men; they do it all the time and don't ask us.

I've started to work with the EU about doing things differently. I see our foreign policy from a broad perspective of which security is one of the most important parts. That's why I would like to see more of the people working for arms control being women.

I think the key is to be a professional, good diplomat. I don't think it is necessary to have only a very strong security policy background – it is important to do security in wider sense.

And I have a good example: my current deputy came from an EU foundation focused on soft political power and economics. Even though this is from a different part of the spectrum, NATO works, as an organisation in quite a similar way. It's the same mechanism: you sit at the table and represent your country – for that you need to be a good diplomat, not necessarily a good commander.

Poland used to have a very strong representation of women in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) but now it's only men. Talking about Ministry of Defence (MOD) – there would never be any female representatives as undersecretary. They could work as the general director only responsible for administrative issues.

I think NATO countries are more advanced. For example, when I look at the meeting of Ministers of Defence and look around the table – there are a lot of women – French, German, Spanish, Estonian ministers...this is great! But where it really becomes tricky – probably the worst outcome – it's in the military.

There are not that many allies working hard on #1325 resolutions and getting more women in military. That's going to take some time. Moreover, because of the whole hierarchy

system, of how you are promoted, women are only now reaching the highest positions.

So, this is why the military is even more difficult. It needs time, but it's still easier to promote a woman to be an ambassador than to be a general.

When I started to prepare the #WomenAreNATO project, all my male colleagues at Visegrad/Insight wanted to be engaged in it. After I've explained that I want only women to participate, they asked to just be present as an audience. I believe more and more men do appreciate the role of cooperation with women and their different attitude and points of view.

Yes... For example, cybersecurity is an interesting sub-area in security. Although there is a real lack of women in that area, it is changing recently.

This is something we've been trying to promote actively: to get more women involved in the cyber-area. I think today it is extremely important area in security as we can't imagine our future without the cyber dimension.

So, women are getting there, yet again the traditional view is that the cyber sector is for men. More and more women are getting involved, and in social media, for example on Twitter, there are many promotions for women available.

Cyber-security is at the top of my list of completely illegible topics among women. They don't want to know and talk about it as it is a kind of IT topic and women – especially in Poland – would prefer to leave it to men. How do you involve women in this area?

There is much more than just a technical side of it. In Estonia, when it comes to the cyber and diplomacy, we've just appointed a new representative for cyber-diplomacy at the MFA who looks on these issues with a wider perspective. She used to work at an external action service heading the cyber unit.

We've also had a former Foreign Minister who is in politics now running for Parliament, but she is dealing specifically with legal aspects, international law affecting the cyber sector, which is also sort of untouched territory. So, we've had women involved in the wider areas of cyber and defence.

What is the public perception of women's roles in the area of cyber?

It's quite high but we've been working on that. I think here, in Estonia, the issue is changeable, and I haven't noticed society saying that it's only a men's topic. Both our former and current presidents are talking a lot about cyber because it starts at the individual-level.

Have you had any PR campaigns to educate people on this topic?

Yes, and there was an age aspect as well since we've wanted to reach the older generation as well as young people who are already involved in social media.

Since it was very successful where are the focal points of such campaigns? In Poland, it is difficult to hear about such a campaign – explaining the protection of bank account etc. Exactly! It's like the "change your password", "update your software" when you get a notification, so you have the latest security features that it offers. Most people still just don't do

that. There is more and more awareness about “who are you” and “who is reaching out” to you in the Internet.

Look at the source, try and be creative, don't set yourself up to be taken advantage of – that's what it's been part of the campaign as well – be careful. I think it's a very good one.

I think the Internet is like a road and requires similar rules and best practices. Be a little bit more careful, but we absolutely cannot live without roads – so too, we cannot live without Internet. Thus, the response from all the Western countries is not to stop using the Internet or onerous restrictions.

And what about disinformation then?

I guess it's the same as for Poland – we've been working on it at least since we became independent. I actually think the view has been consistent because of our geography and because of demography – we have quite a large Russian-speaking minority in Estonia, and we are particularly careful of their protection.

But I have to say that I think we've built up quite a lot of resilience – everything what is going on in the past three years has not been surprising to any Estonian.

Estonians have been taught to not just take the news as it comes but to be critical, to check – what is the source. We've done a lot of work with Estonian journalists – not in a way of the state telling them which sources to listen to – as we have free media – and everyone decides what to listen to or read. We've just made people be aware that it's important to be critical of where the information is coming from.

So, I am not saying that we have achieved perfection, but there is one really interesting point; our elections have not been successfully manipulated in terms of disinformation in comparison to the US. This is the case of many post-communist countries; societies suffering from disinformation are quite sceptical.

We, in Poland, and I think I can say it loudly, are quite anti-Russian. I think that any Russian seems to be suspicious, and we don't trust Russians at all. However, this is more about my generation while the younger generation is not very educated in contemporary history or today's security issues, and they are not that aware of disinformation or propaganda etc. So, it's more worrying, and I do think that in Estonia you are trying to educate people as early as possible, aren't you?

Yes, we are, but you cannot be aggressive in reforms if I can give some advice. There are two things you can do for society: talk about the past and educate people in a modern way – it's very important.

Younger generations never lived during the Soviet times. Of course, there are films about the past to teach people, to make younger people realize the past...

It is like with WWII. Once I went with my nephews to the museum where there was different equipment from WWII, and they were fine with that but suddenly one of them asked me – but what is war? What is it? I was so surprised as I was told about war by my grandparents and parents from an early age, but the younger new generations haven't had the same experience.

True. We're still working on it and we should continue to work on it. And another thing – if we want Estonia's culture to sur-

vive – our language, which is spoken only in Estonia as well as our traditions – then everybody should contribute it.

In Estonia's case what is important are the cultural elements. Every four to five years we have a summer festival where 200,000 people gather together in one place. This event is very patriotic, and it helps to build up our culture's resilience. If we stick together, work together, we can overcome many problems together.

In 2014, when Crimea was occupied, I had people coming to me and asking for my opinion on the event and comparing it to the actions in 1944. They were wondering if that happened so easily what is going to happen next? I tried to explain about NATO's and the EU's views on Crimea.

What comes to my mind now, from what I have read, Estonians feel most insecure among other nations about the whole geopolitical situation, and, especially, after the Crimean annexation.

I haven't seen comparative analysis, but maybe Lithuanians or Poles are even more insecure. That is why we all need to cooperate as we are, security-wise, challenged at the same level. It's all about geography that we cannot change, unfortunately.

You have mentioned that you have been working with the EU. How compatible can NATO and the EU be? There is an idea about the second EU army. Why should we pay for that?

This is not something we would support. The convergence is going on step-by-step, and let's see where it goes. We think that the EU should not complicate NATO's actions. If we see a member state (also a NATO member) increasing its capabilities – that's good for NATO.

Probably in Estonia it is not an issue, but in Poland there is a discussion about another EU army, since people do not understand the meaning of it.

Well, one may say the US seems to be taking a different direction in comparison to the EU, and so there is a need. Although, if you look at the facts, the US is increasing its presentation providing troops in Germany, the funding is increasing, and they want to stay in Europe as the EU has not that many capacities as the US. That is why, we spend on it at least 2% of income, as is the case of Poland as well.

There was a long public discussion on this topic with many explanations from experts.

I always say that politicians should be leaders in terms of explaining on such topics, presenting arguments that the public understands. If they cannot explain, then who should? If there is a collective security alliance, then collective decisions should be made. /

Masthead

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