



Reflections on Canada's
National Action Plan on
Women, Peace and Security:

Gains, Gaps & Goals

MARCH 2021

Young women in leadership and economic empowerment workshop in Goma, Democratic Republic of Congo.



Edited by Katrina Leclerc, Beth Woroniuk,
and Claire Wählen

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Acronyms

BIPOC	Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour
BVOR	Blended Visa Office Referred
CAF	Canadian Armed Forces
CNAP	Canadian National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security
CCOFTA	Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
DCAF	Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DND	Department of National Defence, Canada
DoJ	Department of Justice, Canada
FCAS	Fragile and conflict-affected states
FIAP	Feminist International Assistance Policy
GAC	Global Affairs Canada
GAR	Government Assisted Refugees
GBA+	Gender-based analysis plus
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
GoC	Government of Canada
IRCC	Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
JAS	Joint Assistance Sponsorship
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Plus
MMWIG	Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls
MOWIP	Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations
NAP	National Action Plan
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Association
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPT	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
PKO	United Nations Peacekeeping Operations
PMSCs	Private Military and Security Companies
PSC	Public Safety Canada
PSEA	Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse
PSOP	Peace and Stabilization Operations Program at Global Affairs Canada

RAP	Resettlement Assistance Plan
RCMP	Royal Canadian Mounted Police
SEA	Sexual exploitation and abuse
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGBV	Sexual and gender-based violence
SRHR	Sexual and reproductive health and rights
TPNW	Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
WAGE	Department of Women and Gender
WPS	Women, peace and security
WPSN-C	Women, Peace and Security Network - Canada
WTRP	Weapons Threat Reduction Program Equality, formerly Status of Women Canada
UN	United Nations
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
YPS	Youth, Peace and Security
2SLGBTQ+	Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Plus



Introduction

BETH WORONIUK & KATRINA LECLERC

Last October, activists, governments and international organizations celebrated the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the first United Nations Security Council resolution on women, peace and security (WPS) (1325). Organizations published research, activists spoke out, governments announced new programs, and the Security Council held its annual debate.

However, all was not rosy. Many of the studies launched during the anniversary bemoaned the lack of progress. Twenty years on gains have been all too few. Despite opposition from WPS activists, Russia introduced a new resolution in the Security Council. The resolution failed to gain the necessary number of votes but the whole episode demonstrated a lack of global consensus on this agenda. Funding remains scarce. There have been only marginal gains in women's participation in peace processes (witness the talks around the future of Afghanistan as one example).

Overlaying the 20th anniversary celebrations were the additional challenges imposed by COVID-19. It was clear early on that the pandemic was having differential impacts on women and men given pre-existing gender inequalities, who works in what sectors, who makes decisions, and the widespread threat to women's safety in their own homes.

Even in this discouraging global context, activists and women peacebuilders continue to organize, lead, and advocate. Many women peacebuilders re-oriented their work to address the needs in their communities related to COVID-19. Activists continued to push for inclusion in local to global processes. They continued to highlight the urgency of addressing sexual and gender-based violence – during the

pandemic and during conflict. They pushed for more and better resourcing for their organizations and initiatives. Activists were also quick to link the concerns and demands of the Black Lives Matter movement to the WPS agenda. Discussions surged on how to bring an anti-racist and decolonial approaches to WPS issues.

CANADA'S SECOND CNAP – STEPS FORWARD BUT STILL GAPS

November 2020 also marked three years since the Government of Canada (GoC) launched its second National Action Plan on WPS (CNAP). This second plan is significantly stronger than Canada's first. It is signed by seven cabinet ministers, demonstrating a higher political profile and commitment. There are three lead partners: Global Affairs Canada (GAC), the Department of National Defence (DND)/Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). As well, the original supporting

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partners are Public Safety Canada (PSC); Status of Women Canada which later became the Department of Women and Gender Equality (WAGE); Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC); and the Department of Justice.

Our publication - Women, Peace and Security in the Age of Feminist Foreign Policy: Reflections on Canada's New

National Action Plan - outlined how the second CNAP is based on a more sophisticated analysis, recognized the importance of civil society actors, and included stronger commitments. That publication, however, also notes that there are still gaps and areas that require attention including policy coherence (including the links between WPS issues and extractive industries), definitions, financial commitments, the low priority given to conflict prevention, WPS issues inside Canada, and reporting.

PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

What has been achieved now that the CNAP is more than half-way through its implementation period? There have been notable advancements. Jacqueline O'Neill was appointed as Canada's first WPS Ambassador in the summer of 2019. The GoC formalized its relationship with civil society through the formation of the WPS Action Plan Advisory Group (co-chaired by this Network) and the allocation of resources to support the WPSN-C's involvement. Other steps highlighted by the Government include the Elsie Initiative

(designed to increase the number of uniformed women in peace operations), co-chairing the WPS Focal Points Network, leading the Global Call-to-Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence in Emergencies, acceding to the Arms Trade Treaty, and supporting the Equality Fund.

Since November 2017, only two progress reports have been published (despite the commitment in the CNAP to have annual reporting each September). The report for fiscal year 2017-2018 was issued in September 2018 (which basically covered the first five months of implementation). The report for fiscal year 2018-2019 was not released until early 2020, given the federal election in the fall of 2019. The report for fiscal year 2019-2020 is expected in March 2021 (six months late due to the COVID-19 pandemic).

The two reports to date include an overview report and detailed progress reports for each of the implementing partners. There is a brief section on 'challenges' primarily outlining the difficulties in the global environment.

The progress reports note the 'results' achieved:

OBJECTIVES:	2017-2018	2018-2019
Increase the meaningful participation of women, women's organizations, and networks in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and post-conflict statebuilding.	Rating: On track	Rating: On track
Prevent, respond to, and end impunity for sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) perpetrated in conflict and sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers and other international personnel, including humanitarian and development staff.	Rating: Mostly on track	Rating: Mostly on track
Promote and protect women's and girls' human rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in fragile, conflict, and post-conflict settings.	Rating: On track	Rating: On track
Meet the specific needs of women and girls in humanitarian settings, including the upholding of their sexual rights and access to sexual and reproductive health services.	Rating: On track	Rating: On track
Strengthen the capacity of peace operations to advance the WPS agenda, including by deploying more women and fully embedding the WPS agenda into CAF operations and policy deployments.	Rating: Mostly on track	Rating: Mostly on track
Improving the Government of Canada's capacity to implement the Action Plan.	Rating: Mostly on track	Rating: On track

These optimistic ratings are supported by lists of specific initiatives. An annex outlines how the ratings were 'based on a whole-of-government analysis and consider the progress reports of all implementing departmental partners' (See note 1).

Do these ratings represent a realistic assessment of progress? The progress report itself notes that measuring and reporting on results continues to be a challenge. Attribution of results to Canadian initiatives is also mentioned as a difficulty. The evidence is primarily a list of initiatives, rather than an independent assessment of progress to date against expected targets. There are few references to evaluations or external assessments. As of March 2021, plans for a mid-term review are only in initial stages.

THIS DOCUMENT: REFLECTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As with previous publications (in [2018](#), [2015](#) and [2014](#)), we asked Network members for their thoughts and analysis. Where have they seen progress in the past three years? What issues would they like to see in Canada's WPS efforts going forward? The response to our call was overwhelming. In the pages that follow, there are eleven chapters. They cover issues in the current CNAP that could be strengthened or looked at from new angles, as well as topics that could be incorporated into future CNAPs.

The opinions and views in each chapter are those of each author and do not necessarily represent the views of all Network members. Nor do they necessarily represent the views of the author's organizations.

We hope that this analysis contributes to the strengthening of Canada's implementation of the WPS agenda in the years ahead – both the completion of this second CNAP and future versions.

THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY NETWORK-CANADA

The WPSN-C is a volunteer network of over 70 Canadian organizations and individuals committed to:

1. promoting and monitoring the efforts of the Government of Canada to implement and support the United Nations Security Council Resolutions on women, peace and security; and,
2. providing a forum for exchange and action by Canadian civil society on issues related to women, peace and security.

The Network was formed in 2012 and was incorporated as a not-for-profit entity in 2019. We are grateful for funding from PSOPs/GAC this past year that has supported our contributions to the WPS Advisory Group and consultations linked to the WPS Focal Points Network. Our work is driven by volunteers and we are grateful for the ongoing support, energy and commitment of our members.

More information on the WPSN-C is available on our website: wpsn-canada.org.

1: There does not appear to have been a systemic roll up/analysis of the targets and indicators in the departmental progress report. This issue was discussed in our 2015 analysis of the first CNAP. This gap appears to have been carried over into the progress reporting on the second CNAP.

Feminist Theory and a Feminist Framework for Analyzing and Advancing Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security

KATE LORD & REBECCA TIESSEN

Feminist theories and African feminist scholarship offer robust analyses of power dynamics related to systems, resources and voice and serve as a guiding framework evaluating – and consider the next iteration of – Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (CNAP). Feminists, with their commitment to intersectionality, draw attention to the ways that different and multiple facets of identity can inform experiences of privilege and oppression. Therefore, in seeking to change systems of power, it is critical to amplifying the voices of those routinely marginalized and excluded from discussions and decision-making, specifically women and girls of the Global South. To elaborate on the significance of feminist scholarship to women, peace and security, we draw on – and celebrate – the pivotal insights of feminist scholars and activists who have championed a transformational feminist framework.

Transformational feminist theorizing seeks to better understand the world as a gendered and power-laden place, and feminist scholars “have long evinced an interest in not only explaining...but also in changing it for the better,” focusing on praxis that disrupts harmful gender norms and builds a more just and equitable world. When applied to women, peace and security, transformational feminist theory challenges mainstream thinking and explores pathways to reform. Sylvia Tamale challenges us to “embrace radical strategies in our struggles” identifying political engagement, vigorous theorizing, radical action and innovation in the face of ‘divide and rule’ tricks that work against feminist goals. In this chapter, we explore what radical strategies are possible and the role of transformational feminist theory in guiding the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

DISRUPTING SYSTEMS, DISRUPTING POWER

In analyzing gendered power dynamics, feminist theory reveals how systems and institutions – especially those involved in peacebuilding, humanitarian aid and development – have not been structured to take into account the experience or needs of women, girls or LGBTQ+ individuals.

This can be seen in policies and responses that are not informed by how conflict and poverty impact the feminine, those living with disabilities, the racialized, and the ‘othered.’ To illustrate, a 15-year review of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security was prefaced with the admission that “changes in conflict may be outpacing the ability of UN peace operations to respond effectively.” However, besides changes in conflict, was the erratic implementation of 1325 as a result of a system that was not organized to respond effectively.

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As an institution, the United Nations was not built or informed by women or people

of the Global South, which has meant that efforts to include and respond to those voices have been reactive and slow. In the same report, the Executive Director of UN Women, Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, notes that despite fifteen years since the resolution on Women, Peace and Security, “there remains a crippling gap between ambitions and actual political and financial support.” As an example of just one of many systems at play, the United Nations demonstrates how difficult it is to disrupt the systemic momentum of institutions that were built to suit the interests and structural preferences of rich white men.

Returning to the principles of transformational feminist theory, we can start to imagine how political engagement, robust theorizing, radical action and innovation can help to reshape the security sphere. Marsha Henry describes this as a need to “push back against men’s claims to a natural ownership over security issues and spaces,” like the United Nations, being careful to “not fall into the ‘effectiveness trap’.” Beyond the idea that women should be added to security and development spaces just because it will make operations more effective, transformational feminist theory demands women to be added to these spheres because it is their basic human right to be included in systems that were wrong to exclude them in the first place. Women’s meaningful participation is a necessary first step to eventually meet demands for broader institutional reimagining.

GETTING MONEY TO THE MARGINS

The second angle to interrogate through a feminist lens is resources. At both a macro and micro level, where is money for security and development going? Who are the beneficiaries? As of most recently, as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we know that “women globally are losing more paid work and doing more unpaid work” and that “full economic parity was 257 years away, even before the crisis.” If resources are allocated by institutions and via systems that are still so vulnerable to gendered shocks as to backslide pay parity so dramatically, it is no surprise that movements and strategies that are gender-informed are severely underfunded.

Additionally, if ideas of economic empowerment were expanded beyond participation in free-market economies, perhaps “many deprivations and deficits could be averted” if only “greater investment in economic capabilities [were made] earlier in life.” This means radical transformation and innovation, like Tamale points out, including the creation of a quality paid care economy, rethinking access to sexual and reproductive health and childcare, and being willing to do “everything it takes [emphasis added], including transformative financing.” If feminists agree that liberation from oppressive gender and social norms must “come from the people who live its realities,” then it only follows that money, too, must go directly to the people who live gender oppression’s reality: women, girls, and LGBTQ+ people.

This can only be done by reforming humanitarian, peacebuilding, and development funding mechanisms and revisiting monitoring and evaluation strategies that do not have room for flexibility or qualitative outcomes. By redirecting significant resources, starting at the grassroots and working from the margins to the centre, the triple nexus of peace-humanitarian-development actions can shift to “resource ‘by and for’ organizations to design their programmes, deliver according to their own priorities, using methods that work for them.” The grassroots are already mobilized, it is up to us to make sure money gets to them.

FIERCE LISTENING

It is well established that conflicts have gendered impacts, and therefore, we have advocated for radical and transformational change to systems and resource allocation norms. However, the final factor gets at how power manifests between individuals, within organizations and between sectors. Feminist theory reminds us that there are, predictably, certain groups that are routinely excluded and ignored, not given or trusted with the power to make decisions, to participate formally, or to lead. However, while they are kept out, these individuals are still persisting in building peace, and developing themselves, their families, and their communities into better places for everyone. Feminist organizations

within the development sector have demonstrated their commitment and capacity to truly listen, believe, trust, and take direction from those who have not been invited to the table, in their work to promote equality and justice in all spaces. By actively seeking those ignored voices, and fiercely listening to the excluded, yet through persistence, we can change who is heard and what is done.

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Feminist theory helps us build a better way forward, one that does not involve speaking or planning for - but instead - with. This will require a “flourishing coexistence [...] and vibrant collaboration” between feminist movements, civil society organizations, genders, peacebuilders, humanitarian actors, and development agencies alike. Returning to Sylvie Tamale’s call for change, we must “embrace radical strategies in our struggles.”

In sum, transformational feminist theory has advanced our understanding of women, peace and security by analyzing gendered power dynamics at play, and insisting on transformational change to eliminate barriers and to pass the microphone. A framework of systems, resources, and voice – or simply put, what our institutions do, where the money goes, and who is listened to – guides the work of feminist activists and civil society organizations but it must also guide the CNAP to ensure we are adhering to transformational feminist principles. The next CNAP could be enhanced with a revised set of objectives that put disrupting systems and power, getting money to the margins, and fierce listening at the centre of all action plans.

Leaders of today: Building Strong Synergies Between Youth, Peace and Security & the Women, Peace and Security Agendas

**KATRINA LECLERC &
SHAYNE WONG**

“Young women should take advantage of both [Women, Peace and Security; and Youth, Peace and Security] resolutions to claim their spaces at local, national, regional and global levels,” says award-winning South Sudanese peacebuilder, Rita M. Lopidia (2020, 37). Lopidia, among many other grassroots peacebuilders, recognizes the importance of intersectional approaches to peace and security, she highlights the need for stronger synergies between the Women, Peace and Security (WPS); and Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) agendas.

In this third-year review of Canada’s National Action Plan on WPS (CNAP), we stress the need to recognize and mainstream Youth, Peace and Security (YPS) in the overall implementation, through key synergies between YPS (especially as stated in UN Security Council Resolution 2535) and WPS, programming, funding, and monitoring.

Canada’s leadership in peace and security is commendable. However, there is a significant lack in the prioritization of the Youth, Peace and Security agenda across all policies, including a lack of explicit reference to YPS overall. This, in practice, can exclude young women from many protections offered by the WPS frameworks and limits their participation. The recognition and amplification of the crucial role of young people, especially young women, in the peace and security agendas, brings significant value added to areas such as peacebuilding, political participation, reconstruction, and building sustainable positive peace. This is also crucial to implementing SDG 16 on strong and just institutions.

By specific recognition and targeting of intersectional analyses in policies, the

CNAP will then be truly inclusive in its implementation and targeted funding. Intersectional consideration emphasizes dedicated initiatives for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC) and other marginalized groups, including those living with visible and invisible disabilities, as both collaborators and recipients of aid.

To strengthen increased intersectional considerations, the CNAP’s domestic and foreign implementation moving forward should focus on the de-tokenization of young women by investing in programs and initiatives that highlight key contributions of young women in humanitarian and other peacebuilding approaches, including youth in political decision-making, peace agreements, and sustaining peace.

Peace and security initiatives should cease to consider young people – including young women – solely as violent extremists or perpetrators of violence, but rather as partners in peace. Dedicated support, promotion and protection of the rights of LGBTQ+ people should also be a priority in applying an intersectional lens for a truly feminist agenda – this is about more than just women and girls, it is also about gender diversity and expression within WPS policy and practice.

WHERE WE STAND IN THE CURRENT CNAP

As it stands, the CNAP has one mention of “youth” and no mention of “young women” in its current written policy document. Under the current definition for Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) “youth” is featured as a protected group. We are cognizant and applaud the wave of feminist funding dedicated to SRHR over

the past four years, contributing greatly to re-building the feminist movements and ensuring access to life-saving procedures for women and young women across the world. The Government's \$1.4 billion annual commitment starting in 2023 is applaudable and more actions to protect the sexual and reproductive health of young women are needed in easily and readily accessible funding for youth-led and youth-serving organizations. While the social stigmas around abortion and other

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sexual and reproductive health services remain taboo and often inaccessible for young women in many regions, targeted funding for initiatives that work to counter these barriers to access should be prioritized – with specific attention focused on the additional stigmas and barriers faced by young women.

RECOGNIZING YOUTH, PEACE AND SECURITY

The inclusion of YPS in the CNAP's written policy and application remains limited but not unrecognized. Funding for YPS initiatives through civil society partnerships and support, including funding to organizations such as the Global Network of Women Peacebuilders and other programs announced in October 2020 by Minister Champagne, are significant steps towards promoting synergies and

implementation of both WPS and YPS. The mainstreaming of funding opportunities such as this would allow for the continuation of the work that has already begun and foster partnerships between the government and civil society in the implementation of the peace and security agendas and the CNAP.

The inclusion and consultation with youth-led initiatives and organizations are pertinent. Striving for a de-tokenizing approach for youth inclusion opens the opportunity to the full and meaningful participation of young people. Youth voices are relevant and important in the dialogue and implementation of YPS, WPS and the CNAP to ensure that the needs and perspectives of young people are being included. The Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace and Security was welcomed to the Feminist Foreign Policy review process and this is reflected in the "What We Heard" document. The Coalition's hope is for continued recognition of the need for the nexus between the two agendas and that this continues to be a priority – to ensure that all individuals living with the intersecting identity of being young and being women are protected and recognized within the CNAP.

Various government departments such as National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces (DND/CAF), Women and Gender Equality (WAGE), Global Affairs, and Public Safety have developed action plans for the implementation of WPS following the CNAP. The strategies outline various actions and commitments from the departments such as the introduction of roles - for example, gender advisors (DND/CAF) and the funding and support of women-led initiatives (GAC). However, there still remains a gap in the support of young people and the intersections between WPS and YPS. Public Safety Canada names youth in their plan and notes, particularly within the strategy on countering radicalization to violence, that youth are a separate group of concern and have their own specific needs, risks and strengths. On the other hand, there are other strategies, such as the one for DND/CAF, which do not have a specific focus on young people and despite having the opportunity for increased implementation of WPS, leave little space for youth engagement.

WHERE OPPORTUNITIES LIE

There are significant opportunities for strengthened representation and inclusion of young women in the CNAP implementation, including by recognizing and naming them as a separate group. The categorization of “women and girls” is not inclusive of “young women” who do not always fall under either category. Their experiences and challenges are often unique, due to the current sociopolitical climate with the lack of clear definition causing their experiences to be overlooked and voices remaining unheard. The importance of such language ensures young women are not only seen but truly protected, enabling meaningful barrier-free participation, and guaranteeing their contributions to re-building and conflict recovery. Through partnerships with young leaders in peace and security initiatives; ensuring the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals; and, recognizing that young women should not be lumped into the same category as children as their experiences are unique and their contributions are different, the CNAP can truly ensure no one is left behind.

Why Canada Needs to be Intersectional: Inclusion of LGBTQ+ Folks in Women, Peace and Security Priorities

ALEXANDRIA KAZMERIK

Canada's National Action Plan (CNAP) on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) highlights that women and girls who have intersecting identities face additional discrimination increased during times of conflict. Women who are members of the LGBTQ+ community live with these various intersecting identities due to their sexual orientation, gender identity or expression. LGBTQ+ women are impacted by the WPS agenda significantly differently than cisgender or heterosexual women. The experiences of LGBTQ+ women must be considered in the CNAP to ensure the implementation of the WPS agenda is inclusive of all women and girls.

The WPS agenda is meant to be inclusive of all women and girls and, therefore, should not solely reflect the experiences and needs of those who are heterosexual and cisgender.

On November 27, 2020, the Government of Canada announced it would begin taking steps towards the first federal LGBTQ+ Action Plan. Through this, the Government of Canada has committed to gaining a better understanding of the experiences of LGBTQ+ community members in Canada, including in important areas such as employment, health care, housing, homelessness, and safety. While this is an important first step for the LGBTQ+ community in Canada, the community cannot exist in a silo. LGBTQ+ women and girls must be included in the WPS agenda and in Canada's National Action Plan as they are both women and LGBTQ+ community members; their experiences as

both cannot be separated from one another.

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR CANADIAN LEADERSHIP

Within the WPS agenda, civil society groups have had to tirelessly advocate for the inclusion of LGBTQ+ women. The frequently referenced UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on WPS and all subsequent resolutions on WPS fail to directly mention women who are members of the LGBTQ+ community.

The WPS agenda is meant to be inclusive of all women and girls and, therefore, should not solely reflect the experiences and needs of those who are heterosexual and cisgender.

However, many still do not include the LGBTQ+ community when discussing topics from a gendered lens. It is vital to ensure that this group of women and girls is not neglected within Canada's WPS work, both domestically and internationally. Globally, Canada has been one of the strongest leaders in the general advancement of LGBTQ+ rights and inclusion through legal protections, resource creation and community partnerships. As such, Canada has the foundation to also be a key leader in ensuring the inclusion of LGBTQ+ women within the WPS framework.

THE ONGOING VIOLENCE AGAINST LGBTQ+ WOMEN

As of 2020, over 65 countries still criminalize the LGBTQ+ community - some countries even continue to impose the death penalty. Members of the LGBTQ+ community are at a greater risk of hate-motivated violence and sexual violence, often due to the amplified rates of poverty, stigma and marginalization they

experience. The current CNAP prioritizes the prevention and response to sexual and gender-based violence; this must explicitly include ending sexual and gender-based violence against women in the LGBTQ+ community.

Research shared by Statistics Canada, in 2014, found that women and girls in the LGBTQ+ community experience increased instances of sexual violence and violent crime. These numbers increase significantly when looking solely at the rates of gender-based and sexualized violence perpetrated against transgender women who often face a lifetime of combatting hate crimes and violence. Additionally, LGBTQ+ women and girls experience sexualized violence perpetrated by heterosexual and cisgender men in an attempt to change their sexual orientation to a heteronormative one - this is known as corrective rape.

A goal outlined in the CNAP is to include more women in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and to deploy more women abroad in peacekeeping missions. While Prime Minister Justin Trudeau offered an official apology in 2017, the Canadian Armed Forces has a long history of punishing LGBTQ+ members and previously attempted to purge them from the CAF. Up until the mid-1990s, LGBTQ+ community members employed within the forces faced discrimination and harassment which led to a lawsuit against the Government of Canada in 2016. Those who were impacted are still working with the Government to ensure there is adequate training on LGBTQ+ inclusion through the LGBTQ+ Purge Fund. Rates of violence against women within the CAF are extremely high while women, specifically women in the LGBTQ+ community, make up a very small population within the CAF. With little information on the present-day experiences of LGBTQ+ women in the CAF, a goal to include more LGBTQ+ women in that space must include steps to ensure their safety not only domestically but also within foreign service. We cannot expect LGBTQ+ women to put themselves into a position where they may experience violence based on their sexual orientation in order to serve in the CAF or on peacekeeping missions; especially, if an LGBTQ+ woman serving in the CAF is deployed to one of the many countries where the community is criminalized.

By excluding LGBTQ+ women and girls from the WPS agenda through the CNAP, the successful implementation will exclude a group who faces disproportional vulnerabilities within conflict and their day-to-day life. Approaches to implementing the WPS agenda and CNAP cannot assume that all women, regardless of other intersecting identities, are heterosexual and cisgender.

INCLUSION FOR YEAR FOUR

Within the last year of Canada's current NAP implementation, there are many ways in which the Government can ensure the inclusion and consideration of LGBTQ+ women and girls:

1. Additional discrimination against LGBTQ+ women and girls must be seen as a barrier in the implementation of CNAP. Progress reports, monitoring and evaluation must not solely reflect the experiences of heterosexual and cisgender women and girls.
2. Work in the area of sexual and gender-based violence should include special considerations and approaches for the interconnected impacts of homophobia and transphobia. Specifically, corrective rape experienced by LGBTQ+ women and girls should be addressed through the protection pillar and included as an issue in existing work being done through the CNAP on sexual and gender-based violence.
3. If Canada intends to successfully include more women in the Canadian Armed Forces and to deploy more women in peacekeeping operations, more needs to be done to address the discrimination and violence LGBTQ+ women face in these institutions. This includes better monitoring and data gathering on the ongoing experiences of LGBTQ+ women in the CAF.
4. In Canada's third NAP on WPS, the Government of Canada's Secretariat for the LGBTQ+ community should be consulted from the beginning through to the monitoring and evaluation of the process to ensure that LGBTQ+ women and girls are included in WPS

implementation domestically and abroad.

5. More data needs to be collected on the experiences of LGBTQ+ women and girls within all areas of the WPS agenda to ensure they are adequately represented and included in future implementation processes.

A Responsibility to Lead: A Domestic Lens to Women, Peace and Security Includes Indigenous experiences

SHAYNE WONG

A common misconception about the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda is that it applies exclusively to active conflict zones. For countries such as Canada, this idea means that the agenda is applied more readily as a foreign policy approach as evidenced in [Canada's National Action Plan on WPS \(CNAP\)](#). However, domestically, Canada can benefit from a mainstreamed domestic implementation of the agenda. Despite the lack of evidence of armed conflict in the country, there are areas of concern that do fall under the WPS agenda.

One concern, as referenced in the CNAP, is the historical treatment, persecution and violence experienced by the Indigenous population living in Canada. In particular,

the genocide against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ+ folks is a particular area that can benefit from the mainstreaming of the WPS agenda.

As evidenced by the National Inquiry on Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG) and its [final report](#), Indigenous women, girls and LGBTQ+ folks have experienced disproportionate levels of violence, abuse and discrimination dating back generations. The Inquiry was launched based on the recommendations of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's \(TRC\) Calls to Action \(2015\)](#). It included all provinces and territories across the country and the federal government within its analysis.

The final report for the MMIWG Inquiry included 231 Calls for Justice which called upon all levels of government (including Indigenous governments), institutions, industries, health care, child welfare, correctional services, and policing activities to take action to end the violence against Indigenous women, girls and LGBTQ+ folks.

As stated in the Calls for Justice, although they may appear as recommendations, they are non-optional legal imperatives and must be taken seriously in order to address the ongoing issue of MMIWG. As compared to previous reports regarding the MMIWG crisis, the actions taken must include preventative measures and not be strictly reactive ones as has been the case in the past.

WPS CHAMPIONS IN FEDERAL INDIGENOUS PORTFOLIOS

The CNAP introduced WPS Champions to the various government offices that signed onto the NAP. Notably, the departments that signed onto the CNAP, and in turn have Champions, generally have a more international mandate and focus making their approach to WPS a more international one. Although there are the beginnings of a domestic mainstreaming and implementation such as with the inclusion of a Champion in the RCMP, more departments with a domestic focus should sign onto the CNAP.

The genocide against Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ+ folks is a particular area that can benefit from the mainstreaming of the WPS agenda.

Most importantly, departments such as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and Indigenous Services Canada should have a WPS Champion. Having a Champion would be a good first step towards concrete action and implementation of the WPS agenda

domestically but also promote issues affecting Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQ+ folks such as the MMIWG crisis. The appointment of a WPS Champion within Indigenous-centered portfolios should strive for Indigenous representation within these positions. Indigenous government staff should be the priority and first consideration for filling these positions within the departments. It is important, however, for this representation to be done in a de-tokenizing manner, ensuring that Indigenous voices are being included actively and wholly within the work of the departments and not in a performative way.

NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR MMIWG

The final report on MMIWG recommended, specifically, the development and implementation of a National Action Plan for MMIWG. The Canadian government has committed to the development of such a NAP with themes of security, health and wellbeing, justice, and culture at the core. This NAP is being developed in partnership with various Indigenous-run and focused organizations from across the country, including the provinces and territories and the federal government. The commitment of the development of this NAP is a good beginning and a step in the right direction. However, the NAP for MMIWG must ensure that there are concrete actions and systems in place to address the issues outlined in the final report on MMIWG and the 231 Calls for Justice. Indigenous peoples need to also be at the forefront of the NAP and the justice process; it will take all of Canada to heal and reconcile but the voices of the Indigenous peoples in this country need to be the central focus. The MMIWG crisis is perhaps one of the most prevalent WPS issues domestically, within Canada. Taking the example of CNAP and incorporating the WPS agenda into the development of the NAP for MMIWG, this could both benefit the work of the new NAP while also further streamlining of WPS internally.

There is no current estimated timeframe for when the NAP for MMIWG will be introduced and implemented. It was originally scheduled to be released in June of 2020 but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic with no new date

stated, as of the beginning of 2021. We acknowledge the strain and difficulties that the pandemic has brought on and the potential difficulties in moving consultations online, however, the delay of the implementation of the NAP for MMIWG should not be pushed any further. The delay has not gone unnoticed, the majority of the major Indigenous organizations across the country want to see more concrete action. With the two-year anniversary of the final report coming in June of 2021, there needs to be concrete action made towards addressing the issue of the MMIWG crisis. Implementing the NAP for MMIWG as well as a domestic approach for WPS would be a start to the work that needs to be done towards justice in Canada.

DIVERSE INDIGENOUS VOICES

Within dialogue around the rights and justice for Indigenous peoples living in Canada, it is common for them to be portrayed as a homogenous group. This is, however, not the case as Indigenous peoples living in Canada are a diverse group of people with varying stories, experiences and needs. It is important for the differences to be acknowledged and recognized between First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples as well as the differences between Indigenous peoples living in urban and rural environments. The way each group has and continues to experience issues such as colonization and the MMIWG crisis are different and therefore the steps towards justice for their communities will be different. It is pertinent that the differences between Indigenous communities and their environments are taken into consideration and actively represented at all levels, particularly with the development of the NAP for MMIWG, and the implementation of Canada's NAP on WPS.

Women, Peace and Security Values Start at Home: A Call for a Domestic Agenda

MAJOR (RETIRED) KAREN BREECK & KRISTINE ST-PIERRE

Following the adoption of Canada's first National Action Plan (CNAP) in 2010, there have been repeated calls for the inclusion of a domestic Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda. These calls are based on the recognition that for Canada to achieve its WPS goals, vital work must also be completed at home.

One key issue is the need to understand and address the legacy of colonialism and violence against Indigenous women and girls. This is a very important area addressed by Shayne Wong in the earlier chapter.

Another domestic theme relates to the internal workings and culture of the organizations from where Canada's United Nations (UN) peacekeepers are selected, namely the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)/police and military, and how those cultures may negatively impact Canadian women in uniform at home and abroad.

Historically, the CNAP's focus on women in uniform centred largely on the number of women who deploy as UN peacekeepers. In 2015-16, Canadian police deployed almost 25% women while the military deployed 13.5% women to UN and NATO operations combined. Given the UN goal of deploying 20% women, the number of Canadian military women deployed was disappointing. Hoping to further improve on these numbers, the military has continued its commitment to aggressive and targeted recruiting of more women into the military.

ADDING MORE WOMEN AND STIRRING IS NOT THE RIGHT ANSWER

There are many organizational-level challenges that require attention if women

are to be equitably supported for deployment to UN peacekeeping operations. There are many organizational-level challenges that require attention if women are to be equitably supported for deployment to UN peacekeeping operations.

For one, UN missions require specific skill sets, such as those usually found in the combat arms trades, but up until now, very few women have voluntarily selected those trades on enrollment.

Those that do join these trades and deploy on a mission may then be faced with sex-specific challenges and barriers, including sexual misconduct.

Minister of National Defence, Harjit S. Sajjan, has stated, "the continued operational excellence of our military also requires...that it be inclusive and that it provide at all times and in all ranks a respectful environment for women."

However, in July 2016, Sajjan launched a gender perspectives roundtable where civil society, academics and past women peacekeepers alike highlighted deployments as a known high-risk time period for unwanted gender-based violence against women in uniform.

A "respectful environment" assumes the absence of sexual abuse and harassment from within the workplace. While all peacekeepers are expected to uphold a zero-tolerance policy when it comes to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) with respect to civilians there remains confusion around whether SEA does or does not include any unwanted sexual-related experiences that peacekeepers personally experience.

For many complex reasons, impacted

peacekeepers (of any sex or gender) might choose to not report or seek out necessary medical and social supports after a sexual misconduct event at the hands of other peacekeepers, NGO staff, UN staff, contractors or even civilian population encounters.

The UN and WPS focus on the prevention, response and accountability for SEA must provide more clarity on how to address when the victim is the peacekeeper.

It is also important to recognize that internal sexual misconduct problems experienced during UN missions arguably start at home, not on the deployment. The UN itself has well-documented struggles in this area with many reports from its own UN staff of a permissive workplace for sexual misconduct. Concurrently, there are long-standing non-respectful workplace issues that have been recognized in federal courts through successful class-action lawsuits against the crown, for both the RCMP and the Canadian military. This speaks to the potential importance to the WPS agenda, to formally acknowledge and address the domestic internal workings and cultures of these organizations. It is hard to contemplate how any organization dealing with decades of ongoing internal sexual misconduct crisis can hope to simultaneously be WPS champions when deployed abroad.

The UN and WPS focus on the prevention, response and accountability for SEA must provide more clarity on how to address when the victim is the peacekeeper.

Another challenge is the lack of minimum standards around the provision of uniformed women's sex-specific health care needs. It is no longer acceptable, at home or abroad, to view the provision of women-specific health care as "extra" or "niche" services. Female sex-specific health care supplies, medications, medical equipment must become integral and mainstreamed. Women peacekeepers must be able to access standardized, quality-assured, full-spectrum birth control,

menstrual control, reproductive and sexual care from all levels and members of the UN health care team. To advocate for this as the UN standard, step one is again to establish high-quality consistent standards in this area at home.

Eradication of gender-based workplace violence and provision of female sex-specific medical care are two of many WPS values that must be achieved for Canadian women serving in the military and the RCMP. In order for the government to champion WPS values internationally, there must be an interconnected strong commitment to those same values domestically – something that continues to be absent without a formalized WPS domestic agenda.

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE NEXT CNAP: DEFINING A DOMESTIC AGENDA

In looking to develop the next CNAP, potential domestic issues include:

1. Focus on women in the military and police, as opposed to women peacekeepers only. Ensure that past and present uniformed women are actively included in the shaping of plans and policies.
2. In order to ensure no unnecessary harm to the women in uniform deployed on UN missions, recognize women's diverse needs and priorities, and the intersectional inequalities they may face (including age, ethnicity, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, marital status, etc.).
3. Ensure all staff are aware of and understand their responsibilities regarding sexual misconduct, observed or experienced, both at home and abroad. Ensure medical and social supports, reporting and investigation systems are clear and accessible to all.
4. Mainstream and properly resource women's health care needs. Ensure that everyone - women, the chain of command and health care providers - know and understand the health care requirements of everyone in uniform at

home and abroad.

5. Incorporate gender equality and WPS themes into core courses and training for all members.
6. Encourage departmental WPS Champions to meet with the WPS Ambassador and continue to actively identify additional gaps or new trends. Include the voice of civil society and the voices of those with lived experience (still serving and retired) in these discussions as well.

For Canada to be a respected international WPS leader, the domestic WPS agenda must be a key component within the next CNAP.

CONCLUSION

“Women’s rights are human rights” - that statement is one of Minister Freeland’s favourites. It is indeed a central Canadian conviction that all people, regardless of sex or gender, share the same fundamental human rights. Although the CNAP is for the most part externally focused, Canadians assume the human rights being fought for internationally would be rights already existing at home, domestically. Anything less would not be seen as government “leading by example,” but a citable example of hypocrisy.

For Canada to be a respected international WPS leader, the domestic WPS agenda must be a key component within the next CNAP. Initial domestic issues to address include ensuring the human rights of uniformed military personnel, both women and men, are upheld, ensuring domestic workplaces free from gender-based violence, and access to full comprehensive sexual and reproductive health care. Investment into the development of a domestic WPS prioritized agenda is a good place to start.

Reflections on the Intersection of Economic Justice and the Women, Peace & Security Agenda: Sudan & Colombia

RITA MORBIA & BILL FAIRBAIRN

The Canadian government's 2017-2022 National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (CNAP) is predicated on progressing towards an ultimate outcome where "women participate in peace and security efforts, women and girls are empowered, and their human rights are upheld in fragile and conflict-affected states." The Action Plan, its associated Departmental implementation plans, and the underlying Theory of Change, are ambitious, imbued with an aspirational quality welcomed by many civil society actors. However, there are serious omissions, which significantly undermine progress – namely, a lack of consideration of Canada's trade and investments, particularly its support for the corporate sector. The CNAP is silent in this regard, as is the Global Affairs Canada-specific implementation plan. This silence, however, speaks volumes.

Canadian trade and investment have an undisputed impact on the WPS agenda. Examples range from Canadian corporate arms sales to Saudi Arabia and its impact on Yemeni women, to the human rights implications for women environmental and land defenders of Canadian mining investment in Latin America. What happens when Global Affairs Canada's commitment to "promote international trade" clashes with its mandate to simultaneously "lead [...] peace and security assistance efforts?"

An integrated, whole-of-government approach to the WPS agenda requires accountability to not just the letter, but the spirit of the WPS agenda. WPS considerations should have primacy in cases where this is a clash with commercial interests. For example, the CEDAW Committee has voiced concern with the negative impact of Canada's extractive sector given an inadequate

extraterritorial legal framework, limited access by women to judicial remedies, and a lack of impact assessments pertaining to women's human rights.

THE CASE OF COLOMBIA

Colombia's 2016 peace accord was met with a profound outpouring of hope. Despite this, the country continues to see a high level of conflict-related violence and human rights violations. The gendered nature of these attacks is seen in the disproportionate impact of insecurity on women, and armed groups perpetuate gender-based violence with virtual impunity, including against members of LGBTQ+ communities.

The CNAP is particularly relevant in this context, especially with respect to specifically-named bilateral measures. In Colombia, Global Affairs Canada has committed to:

- Support the increased and meaningful participation of women in peacebuilding, recovery and conflict resolution;
- Support women's empowerment and the advancement of gender equality, including through the engagement of men and youth; and
- Mainstream WPS and gender into peace and security efforts in Colombia.

Each of these priorities has an associated target, indicator, baseline data and activities.

Juxtaposed against these goals, however, are specific concerns by civil society actors related to Canada's commercial relationship with Colombia. Following the ratification of the Canada Colombia Free Trade Agreement (CCOFTA), civil society organizations engaged in a review process

related to human rights concerns as stipulated in the agreement. This process bore little resemblance to the full Human Rights Impact Assessment they had called for prior to the signing of the CCOFTA in order to ensure that Canadian corporate engagement would not exacerbate or benefit from an alarming human rights context. In 2018, they collectively decided to suspend their engagement (See note 2). As Amnesty International Canada noted, “the [Canadian government] report prepared in 2017, like those prepared in 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2016, very notably failed to assess one of the most significant trade-related human rights concerns in Colombia; the rapidly increasing presence of extractive companies in and around the territories of Indigenous peoples amidst armed conflict, grave human rights violations and forced displacement that, according to Colombia’s Constitutional Court, threaten more than one-third of Indigenous nations in Colombia with physical or cultural extermination.”

In recent years, there has been a sharp increase in threats and assassinations of community leaders, with particularly devastating consequences for women environmental land defenders, social activists and human rights defenders. For example, the Export Development Canada funding for the Hidroituango dam on the Cauca River in Colombia proceeded in 2016 despite long-standing community opposition and human rights concerns. Outspoken women human rights defenders to the dam face security threats to this day and communities are still waiting for reparations for the environmental and human rights-related harms inflicted. An intersectional analysis of this context surfaces the many threats that women and communities, particularly those who are rural and Indigenous, face with respect to Canada’s trade and investment agenda in Colombia.

THE CASE OF SUDAN

Similarly, the people of Sudan, particularly women, were overjoyed at the ousting of the long-standing dictator Omar al-Bashir in 2019. Having been at the forefront of the revolution, many women looked forward

to not only a more open and democratic political context but a dismantling of the misogynist social and judicial framework. Women had long experienced human rights violations at the hands of armed actors and hoped to see an end to these threats.

An integrated, whole-of-government approach to the WPS agenda requires accountability to not just the letter, but the spirit of the WPS agenda. WPS considerations should have primacy in cases where this is a clash with commercial interests.

Exploiting Sudan’s mineral and agricultural wealth, the al-Bashir regime sponsored a profoundly patronage-based, kleptocratic economy. Today, at least 80% of all economic activities still operate in a shadow economy. Extractive industries are disproportionately in the hands of former or current armed actors including the military, paramilitary and rebel forces. The army and security services are reported to control 250 companies in areas such as mining and agriculture. This economic power drives their political influence, impoverishes the country, and fuels insecurity. It also disempowers the voices of women at the expense of genuine democratic reform and is proving very difficult to dismantle. The prevailing climate of physical as well as economic insecurity, once again, has a disproportionate impact on women.

Although there are no stated bilateral priorities with respect to Sudan in the CNAP, Canada has begun a deeper engagement with the country post-revolution, including upgrading our diplomatic and development presence and activities. Increased trade and investment, given the prevailing neoliberal approach and seeming business opportunities, are understood to be a likely next step.

2: Americas Policy Group. Letter to Global Affairs Canada. February 22, 2018.

However, without a thorough analysis using an intersectional WPS-focused lens, it is unclear that Canadian trade and investment would, on balance, align with the CNAP's human rights-oriented aspirations. Civil society organizations, and local women human rights defenders are profoundly concerned with the risk such a context presents.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Without an integrated whole-of-government approach to women, peace and security that includes a comprehensive consideration of trade and investment, the CNAP will fall short of its stated objectives, and will in fact, in specific cases, seriously undermine Canada's WPS agenda.

As first steps, we recommend:

1. Enacting a strong legal and regulatory framework in Canada to which Canadian corporations and the Canadian government would be accountable, which includes but is not limited to:
 - a. an independent Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise with the powers needed to be an effective mechanism, in particular, the power to compel testimony and documents; and provided with an appropriate budgetary allocation; and
 - b. legislated comprehensive and mandatory human rights due diligence provisions, requiring Canadian corporations operating abroad to identify, prevent and mitigate violations, with consequences for non-compliance, including provision for liability when companies cause harm in their global operations (subsidiaries and supply chains).
2. Inclusion of priorities within the next CNAP that fall at the intersection of Canada's trade and investment goals, and its WPS agenda.

Women, Peace and (Private) Security

MAYA EICHLER &
AMANDA CHISHOLM

Canada's commitment to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda is ambitious and inspiring. Done right, Canada could be a world leader in implementing the WPS agenda were it not for at least one significant blind spot in the CNAP: a skewed understanding of today's global security context—one that does not account for the growing use of Private Military and Security Companies (PMSCs).

Canada's current 2017-2022 NAP misses the scale and footprint PMSCs have in international conflict and post-conflict settings as well as in our own domestic security sphere.

Consequently, the CNAP does not acknowledge the challenges (or any potential benefits) that come along with privatizing the global security environment. Nor does it mention as stakeholders the actors working on accountability and regulatory efforts aimed at PMSCs.

We urge Canada to add consideration of today's privatized global security context to the agenda for Canada's next NAP. Without it, Canada cannot ensure it will be a leader of transformative change in the security sector, or even fulfil its obligations under the WPS agenda.

Canada's current 2017-2022 NAP misses the scale and footprint PMSCs have in international conflict and post-conflict settings as well as in our own domestic security sphere.

TODAY'S GLOBAL SECURITY CONTEXT

Private security is a common and integral feature of contemporary global security operations. As such, Canada, as well as its NATO allies, rely on private security actors to support their military operations. This was most vividly illustrated in Afghanistan where private contractors formed part of Canada's "Defence Team," working alongside the military to assist in security and logistics.

It is a challenge to define what private security is. Private security is a multi-billion-dollar industry that draws upon a global workforce. [Group4Security](#), as an illustration, operates in over 85 countries and is the second-largest global employer with 533,000 employees. Private actors are contracted to provide a multitude of security services. Services include but are not limited to, security training, convoy protection, static guarding, personal protection, kidnap and ransom, policing and prison services, and logistics for security bases. The industry itself continues to expand its reach. We need only look to COVID-19 and our response to managing it. We see private security actors assisting in Canada's management of COVID-19 through [enforcing lockdown measures](#) as well as in [logistical planning and delivery of vaccines across Canada](#).

WHY PMSCS MATTER TO THE WPS AGENDA

Drawing upon private security comes with significant risks. Reports by the Geneva Centre for Security Sector Governance (DCAF) and the [UN Working Group on Mercenaries](#) highlight slipshod financial accountability, impunity for war crimes, disregard for local populations, and exploitation of security workers from the

Global South. Sexual harassment, gender-based violence, and human trafficking have also long plagued the private military and security industry. Therefore, questions of accountability, ethics, and regulation have been at the forefront of academic and policy debates on PMSCs.

Today's privatized global security context raises five key concerns for the WPS agenda:

1. **Lack of Diversity in Security Contractors:** Security companies are disproportionately managed by white men with former military and police experience, who hire other men globally. This demographic trend in the provision of private security runs counter to the gender mainstreaming of public security organizations, not to mention Canada's broader commitment to diversity, inclusion, and equity.
2. **Narrow Understanding of Security:** Alongside a predominately male workforce, the industry also reinforces masculinized and militarized notions of security that rarely take into account more holistic understandings of security, such as human security, women's security, or environmental security. For example, the use of PMSCs can lead to a "hardening of security" focussed on protecting international organizations from local populations.
3. **Increased Insecurity and Human Rights Violations:** The UN Working Group on Mercenaries found that the increased use of private security actors escalates local conflict and increases insecurity among civilian populations. This has to do, at least in part, with the "for-profit" mentality that is brought into the mission through private security actors, which may undermine conflict resolution.
4. **Decreased Accountability:** Currently PMSCs are governed through voluntary and self-regulatory mechanisms. These standards are insufficient. They are not universally adopted by governments, international organizations, or NGOs who are clients of private security companies. Even companies with

egregious violations and fraudulent activities have had their contracts renewed, highlighting the limitations of the market regulating itself. Being able to rely on PMSCs may also make states less accountable, as they can wage war without having to rely to the same extent on the support of their citizens or fear diminished support as a result of military casualties. This goes against the broader WPS goal of holding all stakeholders accountable for how they conduct themselves in post-conflict environments.

5. **Limited Access to Justice for Local Populations:** Numerous reports and testimonies highlight that access to justice for local populations in the regions where private security companies operate are notoriously difficult. Efforts to seek justice come at high risk of personal danger. This undermines the aims of the WPS agenda to ensure justice for local populations in conflict and post-conflict settings.

What do these concerns mean for Canada as a client of private security or as a partner working alongside private actors in global security contexts?

First, Canada finds itself at risk of being complicit in human rights violations and gender-based violence through its association with PMSCs, or by virtue of operating in the same spaces. Canada itself has faced questions of accountability regarding its role in hiring private contractor Sabre Security for the protection of its embassy in Kabul. Last year, Canada settled out of court for an undisclosed amount in a 2018 class-action lawsuit brought against the Canadian government for its gross negligence in ensuring the safety of Nepali and Indian contractors who were killed en route to work.

Second, without accounting for the challenges and managing the risks associated with the private security sector, Canada's potential for being a global leader on WPS and other transformative security sector initiatives remains limited. Canada was one of the states to support early regulatory efforts, such as the Montreux Document. Canada is also a signatory of

the [International Code of Conduct](#) for private security service providers, a set of multi-stakeholder principles and standards. But Canada has not been a leader (unlike, Switzerland, for example) in recent efforts by DCAF to provide states with guidance on how to integrate a gender perspective into PMSC regulation. These efforts have emphasized the need to address gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse, and unfair labour practices.

Today, whether Canada itself is employing PMSCs or not, it cannot avoid interacting with them on international operations. This security reality presents unique challenges for transparency, accountability, human rights, and the rights of women and girls. Therefore, it is imperative for Canada's NAP to directly and explicitly include consideration of private security in its next iteration.

GOING FORWARD

What can Canada do to address private security actors in its next NAP?

1. As a first step, acknowledge security privatization within the NAP's contemporary security context, alongside Canada's own use of PMSCs. Map the actors and roles of PMSCs in Canada's security sector. Key stakeholders such as CAF/DND should specifically note in their implementation plans how they partner with PMSCs and what the implications of this relationship are for WPS.
2. Compile a list of potential stakeholders with relevant expertise on PMSCs to bring into future consultations. This list could include the UN Working Group on Mercenaries, the Swiss Government, DCAF and the International Committee of the Red Cross as the co-chairs of the Montreux Document, the [Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise](#), and others.
3. Lead national and international regulatory efforts to develop robust auditing and accountability measures. Developing industry codes of conduct and establishing self-regulation of the industry has been one mechanism to bring global security companies into the fold of international law and regulation. But they are insufficient without strong national regulation.

Note by the authors: We gratefully acknowledge that the title of this chapter is inspired by the workshop on Women, Peace and (Private) Security jointly sponsored by the United Kingdom's Economic and Social Research Council, Canadian Government, King's College London, University of Vienna, and the Austrian Institute for International Affairs (oiip). The workshop was held on January 12, 2021, and was invaluable in inspiring our chapter.

Missed Opportunities: Disarmament and Canada's National Action Plan on Women Peace and Security

FARAH BOGANI & ERIN HUNT

Any plan on women, peace, and security should include disarmament. The application of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda to disarmament has been recognized since the initial adoption of United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325, which included language around mine clearance and mine awareness. Yet Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (CNAP) does not mention disarmament in its text. The only reference to disarmament in the CNAP document is a definition of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration which is a specific line of work regarding combatants in an armed conflict. The CNAP is silent on issues of weapons and their impact on people despite the importance of disarmament to global peace and security.

Consequently, it has been difficult for the Government of Canada to effectively implement the CNAP with regard to disarmament because arms control, disarmament, mine action and non-proliferation are only listed in implementation plans and the Theory of Change, not in the CNAP itself. And although some progress has been made recently, the CNAP remains a missed opportunity for Canadian leadership on disarmament.

A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY: FULLY AUTONOMOUS WEAPONS

In particular, one of the areas of missed opportunity is that of fully autonomous weapons. Fully autonomous weapons, also known as lethal autonomous weapons, are weapons systems that can select and engage targets without meaningful human control. Such weapons pose challenges to the WPS agenda and advocating for a pre-emptive ban on their development and use

would lead to greater national and international security. Fully autonomous weapons were first featured in the Minister of Foreign Affairs' mandate letter in December 2019, and Canada supported initial discussions on autonomous weapons systems and gender at the UN. However, the issue has still not seen much movement or made significant inroads in Canada's policy and programming. Target 5.1 of Global Affairs Canada's implementation plan to mainstream WPS and gender into the Weapons Threat Reduction Program (WTRP) makes mention of conventional weapons (the category of work that autonomous weapons traditionally fall under), but the WTRP itself lacks reference to tackling the issue of fully autonomous weapons or even conventional weapons.

With Canada's commitments to gender equality and empowerment, and to mainstream GBA+ initiatives into its policies and programmes, the lack of attention and action on the threat of fully autonomous weapons is a glaring oversight.

If the goal is to mainstream WPS and gender in the WTRP, fully autonomous weapons present a golden opportunity. Taking a GBA+ perspective, the development of fully autonomous weapons is a gendered and racially discriminatory issue. Giving machines the ability to select, engage, and make life-and-death decisions based on black-box machine-learning and algorithms trained on datasets risks

reproducing current gender and racial biases. This will only further encode gender, racial, and other inequalities into institutional and social structures. One need only look at how trained algorithms act in the real world. The proliferation of these weapons would also perpetuate gender- and sexual-based violence, as well as structural racism.

With Canada's commitments to gender equality and empowerment, and to mainstream GBA+ initiatives into its policies and programmes, the lack of attention and action on the threat of fully autonomous weapons is a glaring oversight.

Canada's traditional arguments that a rules-based international order is sufficient and that a ban is not necessary is also an argument for what has been a traditionally patriarchal, colonial, and white-dominant structure. For a country that prioritizes a feminist foreign policy and a WPS agenda, leading the negotiation of a treaty on fully autonomous weapons should go without question. By making a clear commitment in the CNAP to disarmament and to retaining meaningful human control over the use of force, Canada can more effectively tackle the threat fully autonomous weapons pose to a WPS agenda.

MISSING SOME OPPORTUNITIES ON LANDMINES

Conversely, Canada is known for its groundbreaking leadership on the Ottawa Treaty banning landmines. Although Canadian leadership on this topic has faded in the last five to ten years, the CNAP has added a layer of focus on gender to Canadian funding for mine action - the area of work to implement the Ottawa Treaty and related treaties. Canada has been able to use the WTRP to support work to implement the CNAP through funding to civil society organizations doing training on gender and mine action, as well as promoting the participation of young women in disarmament decision-making. These projects have had a noticeable impact on the mine action community by dramatically increasing the number of young women participating in diplomatic

meetings, providing training on gender-sensitive mine action and researching the impact of employing women in mine action.

While the CNAP has influenced funding of mine action projects, ensuring political support in diplomatic fora for this work is another missed opportunity. In particular, it should be noted that the Canadian delegation was reluctant to support a working paper on implementing gender mainstreaming in the Mine Ban Treaty which was tabled by Finland at the 4th Review Conference of the Mine Ban Treaty in 2019. Canada eventually signed on to the Working Paper on the final day of the Review Conference after significant civil society pressure but was too late to be listed on the official document as a supporter. Similarly, Canada has not been a vocal supporter of efforts to mainstream gender in the ongoing 2nd Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. These actions are in stark contrast to Canada's work at the UN General Assembly's First Committee where Canada has been instrumental in including additional language on gender and women's participation in a number of resolutions on disarmament and security. If Canada is to live up to the potential of the CNAP, consistent diplomatic energy must be directed towards this work in all fora. Leaders on WPS cannot pick and choose when and where they want to put in the effort.

OPPORTUNITIES ABOUND ON NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Finally, the field of nuclear disarmament has seen some dramatic changes in the past three years. The CNAP was released approximately two months after the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was opened for signature. That ground-breaking treaty set a new standard for integration of WPS considerations into international humanitarian law, with the preamble recognizing the disproportionate impact of nuclear weapons on women and girls and "supporting and strengthening the effective participation of women in nuclear disarmament." It is widely

considered the first feminist treaty on nuclear disarmament, which brings it in line with Canada's feminist foreign policy more broadly. The TPNW reached 50 ratifications in 2020 and entered into force in January 2021, without Canada.

As the international community moves towards the First Meeting of States Parties of the TPNW, Canada can either embrace this ground-breaking feminist treaty by studying the TPNW in Parliament and attending the Meeting of States as an observer - or miss another opportunity to promote WPS in disarmament.

DISARMAMENT: A KEY PRIORITY FOR THE NEXT NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

Three years after its release, the CNAP's implementation with regards to disarmament remains uneven. There has been some successful program work and diplomatic progress but there remains much work to be done. The fact that the current CNAP does not mention disarmament in its narrative remains a problem. Amid so many competing priorities, it is difficult to implement something that is not an explicit objective. This oversight has led to a number of missed opportunities over the past three years.

Civil society has written on the intersection between WPS and disarmament since the launch of the CNAP but those efforts are not as effective as an explicit direction from the document. Mines Action Canada hopes to see an improved implementation of the CNAP in the field of disarmament over the next two years, especially in work on fully autonomous weapons, landmines, cluster munitions and nuclear disarmament. We strongly encourage the Government of Canada to ensure the next National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security includes robust initiatives that address the full spectrum of disarmament issues to prevent future missed opportunities.

Bombs Away: Linking Nuclear Disarmament to WPS

CHARLOTTE AKIN

United Nations (UN) Secretary-General António Guterres' 2018 Agenda on Disarmament emphasizes the critical role of women in brokering and sustaining peace, security, and progress. In the field of disarmament, feminist perspectives and advocacy have reinforced non-proliferation, arms control, and diplomacy principles as crucial tools in the prevention and mitigation of conflict. However, 20 years since the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS), the topic of disarmament is rarely addressed in the context of the WPS agenda. In particular, the disarmament of nuclear weapons remains largely overlooked as an effective strategy to strengthen the overall implementation of the WPS agenda.

Linking nuclear disarmament to the Government's commitments to Feminist Foreign Policy and the WPS agenda would markedly improve the conditions necessary for sustainable peace and human security.

Canada is well-positioned to take humanitarian action against these immoral, and now illegal, weapons of mass destruction by ratifying the first multilateral nuclear disarmament treaty in more than two decades.

CNAP: NARROW FOCUS, NARROW RESULTS

Canada's National Action Plan (CNAP) on WPS identifies laudable objectives for the implementation of the WPS agenda, namely increasing the meaningful participation of women and civil society networks in conflict prevention and resolution and ending impunity for sexual and gender-based violence perpetrated by peacekeepers and other international personnel. The CNAP is also firmly situated within the Government of Canada's

broader discussions on feminist foreign policy. There are, however, clear gaps in the analysis and scope of what the CNAP identifies as "WPS issues."

The CNAP misses two opportunities about WPS that hinder its meaningful implementation. The first is that the CNAP narrowly frames the WPS agenda in the context of fragile and conflict-affected states (FCAS). While it does make reference to "Canada's Own Challenges" with disproportionate levels of violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls, the CNAP is largely outward-looking in its objectives. Limiting the application of the WPS agenda to conflict and post-conflict situations suggests that the WPS agenda need not apply to states "at peace" nor be critically considered in Canada's domestic or international security policies. In turn, colonial hierarchies of "us" versus "them" are reproduced through the framing of Canada as a benevolent "practitioner" of WPS in FCAS while these states are constructed as mere sites of intervention and passive recipients of the WPS agenda.

Linking nuclear disarmament to the Government's commitments to Feminist Foreign Policy and the WPS agenda would markedly improve the conditions necessary for sustainable peace and human security.

The CNAP's second missed opportunity is that it fails to comprehensively address one of the most effective tools in the prevention of conflict and promotion of peace:

disarmament. Disarmament appears just once in the CNAP, as part of the glossary page that describes Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) processes that fighters and disband military units (presumably in FCAS, not Canada itself). What is not mentioned is the existential threat that the proliferation of nuclear weapons poses to humanity, peace, and sustainable development in FCAS and states “at peace” alike.

GENDER & NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Nuclear weapons, war, and disarmament are clearly linked to discussions of gender, human security, and women’s leadership. In Hiroshima and Nagasaki, women *Hibakusha*, or survivors of atomic bombings, faced almost double the risk of developing and dying from cancer due to ionizing radiation exposure. This gendered difference was also observed after the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident, where girls were considerably more likely to develop thyroid cancer from nuclear fallout than boys. Despite experiencing disproportionate harm, women are also underrepresented at multilateral fora where nuclear weapons and disarmament are discussed. At the Review Conferences of Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 2005, 2010, and 2015, the total participation of women was only 17.8%, 25.6%, and 27.2%, respectively. Thus, women’s perspectives are marginalized from important negotiations with nuclear-armed states and do not have equal influence on decision-making processes on disarmament. Lastly, the discourse surrounding international security, nuclear weapons, and disarmament are highly gendered and binary: hard power versus soft power, active versus passive, or national security versus human security. Those championing nuclear deterrence are associated with the masculine sides of these dichotomies whose underpinnings rely on “strategy,” “rationality,” or “pragmatism.” Whereas, those calling for nuclear disarmament are linked with “idealism,” “irrationality,” or having “unrealistic” goals. Within this paradigm, the security of the state is privileged over the security of human lives as the disastrous humanitarian consequences of even limited use of the world’s arsenal of

almost 14,000 nuclear warheads become abstracted and divorced from reality.

THE TPNW, WPS, & CANADA’S ROLE

As nuclear-armed states spend billions of dollars modernizing their stockpiles – whose explosive yields are between 20 and 50 times more powerful than the bombs dropped on Japan, and as multiple countries accelerate their nuclear programs, the risk of nuclear weapons use is at its highest since the Cold War.

Coupled with the apocalyptic impacts of climate change, the use of nuclear weapons would kill billions from radioactive fallout, crop failures, and starvation. Yet after decades of tireless activism, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), which entered into force in January 2021, serves as a beacon of peace and safety from nuclear weapons.

The TPNW is the first legally binding international treaty that comprehensively prohibits nuclear weapons with the goal of their total elimination. The TPNW follows up on the unfulfilled obligations outlined in the NPT, where state-parties agreed to pursue “good-faith negotiations” on measures leading to the complete disarmament of nuclear weapons. The treaty explicitly references the impacts of nuclear weapons on women, Indigenous peoples, and the environment and recognizes the importance of the full and effective participation of women in sustainable peace and security. Signing the TPNW means that signatories recognize the disproportionate impacts of nuclear weapons on women and girls while committing to increased participation of women in leadership and decision-making roles related to nuclear disarmament. The TPNW strengthens all four pillars of the WPS agenda and would demonstrably support its full implementation.

When the Treaty was negotiated in 2017, nuclear-armed states and members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), including Canada, boycotted these negotiations citing their position of nuclear deterrence as necessary for maintaining international peace. Fifty-six former leaders, seven of whom are past Canadian Ministers

of Foreign Affairs, National Defence, and Prime Ministers, recently disagreed with this position stating that “nuclear weapons serve no legitimate military or strategic purpose.” Despite Canada’s purported commitments to nuclear disarmament, the Government’s refusal to participate in multilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament casts doubt on its ability to demonstrate political leadership and advance diplomacy on international peace.

But there is still hope for Canada to be a leader among NATO-allied nations and take decisive action against weapons of mass destruction. In fact, there is a strong precedent for Canada to do so. In the 1990s, the pressure was building for a worldwide ban of anti-personnel mines under the banner of the International Campaign to Ban Landmines. Canada successfully demonstrated diplomatic leadership by stewarding the conference that ended in a legally binding international treaty banning anti-personnel mines – known as the Ottawa Treaty. Driven by humanitarian and human security obligations, Canada established itself as a multilateral actor working for international peace and security. Over 75 years after the only wartime use of nuclear weapons, it is time for Canada to lead again. Signing the TPNW is not merely a measure in arms control – it is a moral imperative to the safety of the Hibakusha, Indigenous peoples, women and girls, and our planet.

Women First, Soldiers Second: CNAP Commitments to Increasing Women's Participation in Peace Operations

SANDRA BISKUPSKI-MUJANOVIC

For over 20 years, increasing the number of uniformed women in peace operations has been a core element in the WPS agenda. Yet progress has been slow. Women make up only 4.8% of military contingents deployed on UN peace operations (compared to slightly over 1% in 2006) despite the long-standing target of 15%. Canada ranks 75th out of 122 countries in terms of troop and police contributions to UN peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and in December 2020, Canada only deployed 39 uniformed personnel on UN PKOs, of which 5, or 20% of military personnel, were women. This represents Canada's second-lowest number of troop deployments since 1956 other than Canada's relatively large contribution of troops in Mali.

The CNAP highlights the need to strengthen the capacity of peace operations to address the needs of women and girls and to identify the barriers to women's participation in peace operations and seek opportunities to "challenge the status quo to transform harmful gender relations and empower women." The plan stresses the connection between women's participation in peace operations and the effectiveness of the missions. The plan also stresses, "the interconnectedness between the WPS agenda and what we do at home" and for Canada to lead by example.

The Department of National Defence and Canadian Armed Forces (DND/CAF) Implementation Plan states that integrating UNSCR 1325 and gender perspectives are "moral and operational imperatives that will contribute to a culture of respect internally and increased DND/CAF effectiveness."

Other objectives are to increase the number of women in the Armed Forces; increase the number and proportion of

women at senior levels; and promote and increase the number of uniformed women deployed to international operations, for example, NATO and UN operations. The Global Affairs Canada (GAC) Implementation Plan includes targets for the increase of uniformed women's meaningful participation in UN peace operations and Canada's contribution to global evidence of barriers to women's increased participation in UN peace operations.

There are two primary issues when thinking about increasing uniformed women's participation in UN peace operations in the context of Canada's NAP. Firstly, if Canada's NAP is focused on leading by example, why does CAF not mention undergoing a barrier assessment? Secondly, why does the NAP continue to primarily propagate and rely on instrumentalist arguments, which suggest women will improve mission effectiveness, to achieve this goal?

GAC launched the Elsie Initiative for Women in Peace Operations to overcome barriers and increase the meaningful participation of women in UN peace operations in 2017 and has made notable progress on a few fronts, including establishing a contact group of

eleven members and bilateral partnerships; engaging with civil society, experts and academics; setting up a Global Fund; contracting a [Baseline Study](#) and developing a methodology to carry out barrier assessments for partnering countries; and the [Measuring Opportunities for Women in Peace Operations Methodology \(MOWIP\)](#), released in October 2020. GAC's progress report for 2018-2019 mentions that the Ghana Armed Forces, Zambia Police Services, Canadian Armed Forces and six other institutions will undergo the barrier assessment.

Interestingly, reports for DND/CAF do not mention the Elsie Initiative or any barrier assessment at all, although it is expected they will undergo one. In terms of recruitment and retention, CAF's target is to increase the percentage of women in the military by 1% per year to 25% by 2026.

Assuming women are the key to achieving global peace and security places the burden on women and makes them responsible for improving institutional flaws with their presence and supposedly intrinsic qualities.

Women's representation has increased from 14.9% in the fiscal year 2015-2016 to 16% in 2020. CAF acknowledges that this target requires attention, and has committed to recruitment and retention programs to work towards it. The DND/CAF progress report for 2018-2019, states that there is an increase in the number of women deployed on missions but does not share the capacities in which they were deployed (for example, traditional or non-traditional occupations).

There are two primary issues when thinking about increasing uniformed women's participation in UN peace operations in the context of Canada's NAP. Firstly, if Canada's NAP is focused on leading by example, why does CAF not mention undergoing a barrier assessment? Secondly, why does the NAP

continue to primarily propagate and rely on instrumentalist arguments, which suggest women will improve mission effectiveness, to achieve this goal?

Recommendations for Canada to address these issues and achieve the targets of increasing the meaningful participation of women in UN peace operations include:

1. Looking inwards: Some NAPs locate insecurity outside of their territorial borders but present themselves as security experts with tools to remedy these concerns. Laura Shepherd argues that the NAPs she examines reproduce a world where "problems occur 'elsewhere' but solutions can be found 'here'."

Canada's NAP states that it is part of a feminist foreign policy and encompasses a "whole-of-government approach to our engagement in fragile, conflict, and post-conflict settings." Thus, the plan states that its primary purpose is to offer support in other countries. The plan acknowledges domestic issues within Canada but is mostly outward-looking, as is the Elsie Initiative. It is essential for Canada to draw its attention further inward and for DND/CAF to undergo a barrier assessment, be it the MOWIP Methodology, or its own methodology that it develops in consultation with women who serve in the CAF and Canadian civil society, experts and academics.

Many women CAF members feel like decisions about them (see note 3) are made without them and this leads to less evidence-based conclusions and directions than if women were directly and meaningfully involved in the process. Further, barriers should be assessed using an intersectional perspective where women's identities are understood in ways that extend beyond their gender. For example, women of colour have different experiences, barriers and opportunities than white women or men of colour.

3: Authors' preliminary research findings, based on 40 in-depth interviews with Canadian women who deployed on PKOs.

2. Rely less heavily on instrumentalist arguments: Overall, Canada's NAP is interested in increasing women's participation to meet global security needs and while part of the plan mentions that it is the right thing to do, there are insufficient rights-based claims throughout the document and instrumentalist claims dominate the narrative.

This reasoning draws on gender essentialisms that highlight that it is "less about what women do, but who they are that makes the difference." This argument draws on the logic that insists that deploying more women will lead to kinder, gentler, less abusive and more efficient missions. It argues that women can better protect citizens since they are less intimidating than men and that there are practical advantages to women peacekeepers as they can search local women at checkpoints; improve intelligence gathering with the local community; and inspire women by serving as role models or mentors for other, especially local, women and girls.

Nina Wilen argues that the instrumentalization of women's participation in peacekeeping can actually contribute to gender inequality and a backlash against women peacekeepers if efficiency does not rise along with women's participation and she questions why we do not expect added value from men's participation the way we do for women.

Assuming women are the key to achieving global peace and security places the burden on women and makes them responsible for improving institutional flaws with their presence and supposedly intrinsic qualities, for which we have insufficient evidence. Until essentialist notions of women's gender stop being the primary justification for their participation, women in the CAF will continue to be women first and soldiers second, which does not support the goal of gender equality.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada and the CNAP: How It Is Helping and How it Can Improve Support to Discriminated Refugees

JO RODRIGUES

If 2020 taught us anything, it taught us that the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda is crucial to the well-being and survival of women, girls, marginalized and discriminated groups.

Forced to isolate, lockdown and quarantine, collectively and simultaneously the world had little choice but to acknowledge the intersectional oppressions - a combination of various and layered oppressions based on social and political identities like sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, race, religion, disability, physical appearance, among others - experienced by these groups.

It was therefore promising to see in the second Canadian National Action Plan (CNAP) that a new action plan partner, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) considered these intersectional oppressions before and was addressing them explicitly in their implementation plan.

For example, in the CNAP, there is a section on Protecting Refugees. It states that it “places a high priority on the protection of refugee women and recognizes their unique protection needs.” The IRCC then names four programs to support women “in precarious or permanently unstable situations who do not have the formal protection of a family unit.” The programs include the Resettlement Assistance Program (RAP) for twelve months to Government Assisted Refugees (GARs); six months of assistance to Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) refugees; three months assistance to LGBTQ+ refugees - through a cost-sharing arrangement with Rainbow Refugee Society; and the Joint Assistance

Sponsorship (JAS) for up to 24 months for refugees who are identified as having special needs.

The existence of these programs demonstrates that the IRCC is aware of the unique needs of refugees within the context of the WPS agenda. It is one experience being a woman who is a refugee and whose rights, dignity and worth are disrespected, ignored and violated. As we know through qualitative and quantitative analysis, it is another experience to be LGBTQ+ (see note 4) and a refugee. The support offered through these programs intends to help these groups recover, rehabilitate and stabilize in order to eventually and hopefully live a more peaceful life with their human rights acknowledged and respected.

Another example of the IRCC recognizing and trying to address the unique needs of women, girls, marginalized and discriminated groups is how they process refugee claims. Their in-Canada asylum system, “provides gender-specific protection to in-Canada refugee claimants who have fled conflicts or fragile states. [...]. Provisions include ensuring a vulnerable person’s physical comfort; being sensitive to cultural and gender issues; and efforts to allow victims of sexual violence the option of choosing the gender of the interviewing officer.”

Acknowledging the experience of refugees and customizing approaches on how to handle claims, with an awareness and respect for the unimaginable ordeal refugees have to go through, is a progressive step. It supports the CNAP’s commitments to gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, respect for women’s and girls’ human rights, and inclusion and respect for diversity.

4: Referring to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, also including and acknowledging two-spirit, queer, questioning, intersex, asexual, agender, pansexual.

OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE THE PROCESS

Earlier in Canada's WPS journey, with the first CNAP, there were times that some implementing action plan partners needed more convincing of taking such an approach. In fact, some implementing partners today could learn a lot from IRCC's gender-sensitive approach.

Despite this approach, there are questions that arise from IRCC's implementation plan and progress reports. In its latest [progress report \(2018-2019\)](#), IRCC notes progress towards its objectives. For example, the IRCC was intentional in creating clarity on what it means to be "vulnerable" by developing a policy approach to newcomer vulnerability. It is ensuring violence prevention resources are available in different languages to newcomer women and their families and using the funding to create a national settlement sector strategy on gender-based violence (GBV) to support frontline settlement workers to identify abuse and make referrals as necessary.

What is not clear in the progress report is how comprehensive these initiatives have been and whether they address the root causes of problems. For example, while it is refreshing to see that the IRCC is methodically working on addressing vulnerable group issues and being inclusive by building the Policy Approach to Newcomer Vulnerability, it would be great to know who was consulted as they built the policy. Were women refugees from conflict and fragile states consulted? Were LGBTQ+ refugees consulted? Were experts with a trauma-informed, survivor-centred approach included in the creation of this policy? Such perspectives would ensure the policy met its objectives to support vulnerable groups and be inclusive. If these groups were consulted it would be beneficial to add more details of the consultative process in future progress reports. If they were not, details of how they will be consulted going forward should be in future progress reports.

In its attempt to make sure violence prevention resources are available in different languages to newcomer women and their families, it is not clear what attempts have been made to adjust the language of GBV for it to be truly

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understood in the languages they are translated into while considering culture and culture appropriateness when it comes to such topics. From conversations with LGBTQ+ refugees and their lawyers, even with interpretations or interpreters, it is still unclear what resources are available for those who have or are continuing to experience GBV. Sometimes interpretations or interpreters are not sensitive enough and sometimes the language used is insufficient to speak to the particular needs of the LGBTQ+ experience. What would be great to see in future reports is how effective this initiative has been not only through quantitative data but through qualitative data. Adopting such an approach would not only be holistic, it could be the start of a decolonized approach to monitoring and evaluation.

With respect to funds being spent to create a national settlement sector strategy on GBV to support frontline settlement workers to identify abuse and make referrals, while a fine initiative, what was unclear and not mentioned is where Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) awareness training fits into the plan. What has been made incredibly clear by the #MeToo movement, the #AidToo movement, [the External Review into Sexual Misconduct and Sexual Harassment in the Canadian Armed Forces](#), recent allegations of sexual misconduct in the Canadian Armed Forces and other findings is that there need to be accountability measures in place to ensure people, especially vulnerable people, are protected from sexual harassment and sexual violence. With this understanding, what would be helpful to see in future progress reports is how the national settlement sector strategy on GBV incorporates training on PSEA, its complaints mechanisms and how it relays this information to vulnerable refugee

groups.

From the implementation plan and progress reports, it is evident the IRCC is taking actions to be clear, methodical, gender-sensitive and inclusive on how it supports the CNAP's commitments. Especially after the experience of witnessing the implementation of the first CNAP, it is reassuring to see clear objectives, activities and detailed reporting on what has been completed to date.

WAYS FORWARD

This chapter raises initial questions regarding how the IRCC is implementing its CNAP commitments. Additional more in-depth reviews would be welcomed especially since the pandemic has and likely will make it difficult for women, girls, marginalized and discriminated refugees to access their programs. This piece only highlights a few observations from a review of the IRCC's implementation plans and two progress reports. The hope is that it brings to light the following: if the IRCC is going to be successful in supporting the WPS agenda, particularly women, girls, marginalized and discriminated refugees, it would be good to learn from previous experience and new information. For example, ensure collaboration with women diaspora groups, women refugees, LGBTQ+ refugees and experts with a trauma-informed, survivor-centred approach; use such perspectives to inform the IRCC's work implementing the CNAP; get even more curious about how effective the activities are in achieving stated objectives through qualitative and quantitative data collection, report on these findings; and, proactively work to prevent SEA.

Conclusion

KATRINA LECLERC & BETH WORONIUK

Canada's National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (CNAP) is often cited by both politicians and government officials as one of the pillars of Canada's feminist foreign policy. As noted in the Introduction, the second iteration of the Action Plan was launched over three years ago and is now more than halfway through its mandate. The two official progress reports argue that the Government is largely 'on track' to achieve the Plan's ambitious objectives. Undoubtedly, there have been numerous positive announcements and initiatives. The Government of Canada has done much in the last three years that can be applauded. However, there are also gaps, critiques, questions, and room to improve.

OVERVIEW

This publication includes analysis and reflections from WPSN-C members on the CNAP and Canada's approach to WPS issues. There are commentaries on concepts and conceptual approaches, on actions taken, on how implementation could be improved, and on themes that should be part of Canada's WPS agenda.

The chapter by Rebecca Tiessen and Kate Lorde looks at feminist theories and the frameworks they set out for the application of gendered, peace and security efforts, including in its diverse and intersectional application of international and national standards for liberal peace. Their analysis offers a reminder of feminist theory to practice - calling upon recognized scholarship to advance WPS and ensure genuine leadership for gender equality.

A call for improved attention to the integration of young women within Canada's WPS initiatives is made in the contribution by Katrina Leclerc and Shayne Wong. The adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 2250 (youth and peace and

security) has paved the way for renewed attention on the unique experiences of young women in peace and conflict. This chapter provides specific recommendations on the synergies between both the WPS and Youth, Peace and Security agendas.

Alexandria Kazmerik addresses the experiences of LGBTQ+ people and calls for their stronger inclusion within WPS efforts and the CNAP. This growing and evolving topic is both new in WPS scholarship but also increasingly recognized by WPS actors and analysts.

There are commentaries on concepts and conceptual approaches, on actions taken, on how implementation could be improved, and on themes that should be part of Canada's WPS agenda.

Shayne Wong argues that the CNAP should explicitly address the experiences and discrimination faced by Indigenous women and girls in Canada. This chapter examines the 2015 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the 2019 Calls to Justice outlined in the final report of the National Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

Another element in the WPS domestic agenda is outlined by Karen Breeck and Kristine St-Pierre. They argue that more attention to the needs and perspectives of women in uniform would strengthen Canada's WPS efforts. This is a very topical chapter given current headlines and the ongoing discussions on sexual abuse in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Rita Morbia and Bill Fairbairn make the case that economic issues, especially trade issues and the regulation of Canadian companies, belong in the CNAP. Citing examples from Sudan and Colombia, their recommendations touch on the need for improved oversight of Canadian corporations and greater accountability for trade policies and agreements.

Private security companies are rarely discussed or included in WPS national action plans. Maya Eichler and Amanda Chisholm review why this issue should be included in future iterations of the CNAP and provide specific recommendations.

In the past, critics of the CNAP have argued that it fails to engage with and invest in conflict prevention and disarmament issues. Two contributions take up these issues. First, Erin Hunt and Farah Bogani explore missed opportunities for Canadian leadership in the field of disarmament, including with regard to fully autonomous weapons and landmines. In the second contribution, Charlotte Akin looks at nuclear disarmament. She criticizes Canada's refusal to ratify the UN Treaty against the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and provides an overview of current possibilities for Canada to engage as a WPS leader in nuclear disarmament, despite its strong links to NATO and other international alliances.

There are also growing expectations on CNAP implementing partners to take a truly intersectional approach, bringing feminist values and approaches to their work.

Sandra Biskupski-Mujanovic examines the experiences and double burden faced by women in the military. She addresses key challenges based on the commitments to increase the number of women in the Canadian Armed Forces and deployed in peacekeeping operations. The chapter also challenges the essentialist view of women as an inherently peaceful group and the role this view plays when using the “add

women and stir” approach to peace operations.

The final chapter looks at the experiences of refugee and immigrant women in the CNAP. Jo Rodrigues explores the realities faced by many newcomer women and the role of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada in the national action plan. She concluded with recommendations to improve the support offered to refugees facing discrimination within Canada.

In different ways, these chapters have a common thread: they ask for the CNAP (and its implementation) to be intersectional, inclusive, and human rights-centred. Authors urge a coherent and consistent approach across the full range of foreign policy issues as well as ensuring that Canada's WPS agenda includes domestic priorities.

WHERE NEXT?

Given that the CNAP is scheduled to expire at the end of next year, it is not too soon to be thinking about Canada's third WPS national action plan. The upcoming midterm review is one opportunity to explore key issues, including:

- Where has CNAP implementation exceeded expectations and where have there been challenges?
- How can feminist evaluation methodologies be used to better understand the impact of the CNAP initiatives?
- What makes a good reporting process and a good progress report?
- Is there a consistent understanding of WPS issues (including GBA+, gender mainstreaming, feminist approaches, etc.) across all the implementing partners?
- What resources have been invested in WPS results across all the implementing partners? What are the trends year over year?
- What lessons are implementing partners learning and how are these lessons shared across departments?
- How can the ‘domestic agenda’ of Canada's WPS agenda be better articulated and addressed?

Another key issue is what consultations can help inform the next CNAP? Who should be involved and how? How can the Canadian government build on other global consultation initiatives to incorporate diverse perspectives of women peacebuilders, feminist activists, women human rights/LGBTQ+ defenders, scholars, and other practitioners (especially including the perspectives of Indigenous women and young women)? The same questions apply to consultations within Canada.

Significant optimism surrounded the launch of the CNAP in 2017. The two progress reports to date are upbeat on initiatives and progress. As we get deeper into the implementation of the CNAP there will be more expectations of reporting on changes and results (not just activities). As this report demonstrates, there are also growing expectations on CNAP implementing partners to take a truly intersectional approach, bringing feminist values and approaches to their work. Activists are asking how Canada's WPS efforts can incorporate anti-racist and decolonial perspectives. We hope that when this implementation period draws to a close, a little more than a year from now, the promise and the ambition of the CNAP will have been achieved.

Contributors

Charlotte Akin is the Advocacy Coordinator at the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW) and board member for the Canadian Voice of Women for Peace (VOW). She holds an MA in Global Development Studies from Queen's University.

Sandra Biskupski-Mujanovic is a PhD Candidate at Western University in the Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies Department with a specialization in Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Reconstruction.

Farah Bogani is the Project Officer for the Campaign to Stop Killer Robots. She holds an MA in Comparative Literature and International Relations from the University of St Andrews, and an MSc in Human Rights from the London School of Economics.

Karen Breeck is retired military medical officer and co-chair of Women Veterans Research and Engagement Network.

Amanda Chisholm is a Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in the School of Security Studies, King's College London. Her research and teaching focuses on privatisation of war and the gender and racialised global labour chains in Private Military and Security Companies. You can follow her on Twitter @amandachisholm5.

Maya Eichler is the director of the Centre for Social Innovation and Community Engagement in Military Affairs, holds the Canada Research Chair in Social Innovation and Community Engagement, and is an Associate Professor of Political and Canadian Studies and Women's Studies at Mount Saint Vincent University. Follow her on Twitter @sicema_msvu.

Bill Fairbairn is a Latin America Program Manager with Inter Pares, a feminist social justice organization.

Erin Hunt is the Program Manager at Mines Action Canada. Follow her on Twitter @erinlynnhunt.

Alexandria Kazmerik is an MA student at the University for Peace and a co-founder of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace and Security (CCYPS). Follow her on Twitter @AKazmerik.

Katrina Leclerc is a PhD student at Saint-Paul University, co-founder of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace & Security (CCYPS) and a Steering Committee member of the WPSN-C. Follow her on Twitter @leclerc_katrina.

Kate Lord is an MA student at the School of International Development and Global Studies and Institute for Feminist and Gender Studies, University of Ottawa.

Rita Morbia is a Co-Manager responsible for the Sudan program with Inter Pares, a feminist social justice organization.

Jo Rodrigues is Coach for Humanitarian Aid and International Development workers. She is also a Trainer and Consultant for organizations on Gender, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Conflict Resolution. Learn more at jorodrigues.net. Follow her on LinkedIn @jorodrigues.

Kristine St-Pierre is the Director of The WPS Group (thewpsgroup.com) and a Steering Committee member of the WPSN-C. Follow her on Twitter @Kristine_StP.

Rebecca Tiessen is Full Professor in the School of International Development and Global Studies and University Chair in Teaching at the University of Ottawa. Her areas of research cover gender, security, development, and feminist foreign policy. One of her most recent publications (open access) is "Whose feminism(s)? Overseas partner organizations' perceptions of Canada's Feminist International Assistance Policy?" with Sheila Rao (2020), International Journal. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0020702020960120>.

Claire Wählen is an independent researcher with experience in the UN, NATO and as a national security reporter. Follow her on Twitter @Claire_Wahlen.

Shayne Wong is an MA candidate at the University of Manitoba, Vice-President of Youth for the Institute for International Women's Rights - Manitoba (IIWR-MB) and a co-founder of the Canadian Coalition for Youth, Peace and Security (CCYPS). Follow her on Twitter @ShayneW95.

Beth Woroniuk is the Policy Lead at the Equality Fund and the chair of the WPSN-C. Follow her on Twitter @bethottawa.





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