

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

MAKING THE DIFFERENCE:
THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. FERRIS: Okay, everybody, why don't we go ahead and get started? I'd like to welcome you to this event on the role of women in conflict situations. My name is Beth Ferris; I'm a senior fellow here at Brookings and co-director of the Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement. And, unusually, my co-chair is also here, and that is Chaloka Beyani, and I will introduce him in just a few minutes.

We've put together a great panel to talk about this issue from very different perspectives and personal experiences, but I thought I might just make a few personal comments before we begin.

You know, I worked in humanitarian operations for 25 years and visited many, many refugee and IDP camps and always sought out displaced women to ask about their experiences and, you know, sometimes it's not easy to walk in as a Westerner to a camp and meet a refugee or an IDP woman and really have a genuine conversation. Sometimes they don't want to talk or sometimes they don't want to talk to yet another Western humanitarian worker asking lots of questions.

But over and over again, in situations as diverse as Colombia and Sri Lanka and Rwanda and Sudan and the Caucuses, this refrain of women yearning for peace, put an end to the war, came up over and over again.

Often women would begin by talking about needs for medical care for their children or better food rations or more information, but always, when it came down to it, it was stop the conflict, I want to go home and live in my home with my family in peace.

That desire of women affected by conflict situations to bring about peace and an end to violence may be universal.

And yet, women have been largely excluded from peace processes, from

negotiations, from efforts by warring parties to work out a settlement. Sometimes it's because they defer to male community leaders or others in their family.

Sometimes they feel shy or uncertain about how to participate. But often they're simply excluded because those who were designing the negotiations or the processes simply don't think about the importance of including women in these processes.

I remember at UNHCR, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, at their 50th anniversary, they invited 50 refugee women from all over the world to come and join in the commemorative events and as the women walked in to UNHCR's main building, which if you've been to is kind of like an open atrium and hundreds of staff and lots of TV cameras, and the then high commissioner, Ruud Lubbers, said very kindly, but somewhat paternalistically, "And now we've invited the youngest refugee woman here to speak. And, my dear, don't be nervous or intimidated by all the TV cameras."

And a 16-year-old Eritrean woman got up with a smile stretching across her face and she said, "I'm not in the least bit intimidated. I've been waiting my whole life to tell you what you should be doing," and then made a passionate plea for education for refugee women and a plea to devote all resources possible to bringing an end to the conflicts that displace women and men and children.

In the past 20 years we've seen the international community take a number of important steps to recognize the role of women in peace processes. We'll hear a little later about resolution 1325 adopted by the UN Security Council in 2000.

But even before that, I want to highlight the pioneering work of Graça Machel who led a study and an investigation looking at the impact of armed conflict on children.

And she was one of the first people to explicitly say in her report, "the

needs of children and women must be at the heart of all actions to resolve conflicts and implement peace agreements.”

As I said, we've got a great panel here to talk about women in conflict situations, from humanitarian, diplomatic, peace processes perspectives, and we're going to begin with Claude Wild here on my left who is head of the division of human security of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. All of their biographies are in the attachment you've received, so I'll be brief. He has worked in various peacekeeping operations in Namibia and Western Sahara.

He worked with the Swiss Development Corporation before joining the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, and has had several diplomatic postings including Lagos, Vienna, Moscow, Ottawa, and most recently, Brussels.

He'll be followed by Chaloka Beyani, who is the Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons, a professor of international law at the London School of Economics and, perhaps most importantly, co-director of the Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement.

He has drafted and participated in negotiation of important international instruments, particularly the AU, African Union New Convention on Internal Displacement, and we are eagerly awaiting word that we'll have a few more ratifications deposited at the AU headquarters so that that convention will enter into force.

We're thrilled to have Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini, who has had a long career in the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and she began as an intern. She's served in Moscow, The Hague, Chechnya, Georgia; she was Swiss ambassador to Bosnia-Herzegovina. She worked with the UN as head of the observation mission to Georgia and most recently headed up the mission of the OSCE looking at Russian parliamentary Duma and presidential elections in the recent months.

We're also very pleased to have Carla Koppell with us who is currently the senior coordinator for gender equality and women's empowerment at USAID but served for about ten years as director of the Institute for Inclusive Security, which worked precisely on the issue of incorporating women and encouraging women leaders to participate in peace processes. She has also worked at the Woodrow Wilson International Center, various U.S. government agencies, and with the United Nations.

So, it's a great panel. We've asked each of them to perform the amazing speed of speaking for only ten minutes and then we'll have a chance for conversation with the panelists and then we'll open it up for discussion.

So, Ambassador Wild, you're first.

MR. WILD: Thank you very much, Madam Chair, dear Beth, dear panelists, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen. It's a particular pleasure for me to be here today on the occasion of the annual Swiss event at Brookings.

Brookings, as you may know, is a longstanding partner of Switzerland's Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, especially of my division, the Human Security Division. So, what does it do, the Human Security Division in Swiss diplomacy? It is responsible for a peace policy, human rights policy, humanitarian policy and international migration policy.

Now, why am I here today addressing you on the topic of the role of women in conflict situations? As you can see by the themes it covers, my division is particularly involved in issues linked with the protection of individuals and communities that are in conflict situations. And as part of Switzerland's strategy on protection of civilians in armed conflict, we try to define and to address the most pressing challenges with regard to the protection of civilians.

And one of these challenges is the protection of vulnerable groups such

as women and internally displaced persons or IDPs.

Women are an especially vulnerable category of civilians affected by the consequences of conflict. They are affected as victims but are also involved as combatants, survivors, widows becoming heads of households, community leaders, and peace builders. That is why Switzerland is of the strong opinion that women must have a greater role in conflict settlement efforts as well as in shaping peace plans.

Now, what has been undertaken at the international and national levels to enhance the participation of women in peace processes? The main international document addressing this issue is UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security, which was adopted in the year 2000.

In fact, adopting this resolution was a historic moment in the international peace keeping and peace building architecture. It was the first time, ladies and gentlemen, a Security Council Resolution expressly mentioned the particular effects of armed conflicts on women.

It also underlined the importance of women's participation in peace processes to ensure comprehensive and sustainable conflict resolution.

If you allow, I will very briefly delve into the three main requirements of Resolution 1325. They are the following: first requirement, increased participation of women in peace building. The resolution underlines that just and sustainable peace can never be achieved if one ignores the needs, the concerns, the rights, and the societal proposals of women, which represent half of any given post-conflict population.

Second requirement, prevention of and protection from gender-based violence. The resolution recognizes the particular vulnerability of women in conflict, displacement, and post-conflict contexts. Particular emphasis is placed on the responsibility of states to prosecute crimes of sexual violence and to put an end to

impunity for all forms of gender-based violence against women.

You all know that violence against women is a planned means of waging war and waging conflict. That is unacceptable.

Third requirement of the Resolution 1325, inclusion of a gender sensitive perspective in all peace building projects and programs. The resolution calls for the consistent integration of the gender perspective in peace building projects and programs. This was intended to have a particular impact on the recruitment and training of military and civilian personnel, who are deployed in peace missions and operations.

Now, what achievement has been made since the adoption of the resolution in the year 2000? Over the past 10 years, Resolution 1325 has decisively influenced security policy debates in political and academic fora and has become one of the most important instruments for women's rights and gender mainstreaming in peace building. That's a fact.

However, over a decade after the adoption of the resolution, the challenge still remains huge, and in 2010, the Security Council noted, "with grave concern, that women's participation at all stages of peace processes remains too low despite their vital role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in rebuilding their war torn societies."

A study commissioned by United Development Fund for Women, UNIFEM, of the 24 most important peace processes from 1992 until 2010 produced following findings, it's interesting: only 2.5 percent of the signatories of peace treaties were women. Only 3.2 percent of peace mediators were women. Only 7.6 percent of the peace negotiators were women. In the peace negotiations in Indonesia, Nepal, Somalia, Ivory Coast, the Philippines and the Central African Republic, women were completely excluded. In the UN Department for Peace Keeping Operation, DPKO, only 2.7 percent

of UN military personnel, 7 percent of UN police officers, and 30 percent of civilian personnel were women.

As these figures show, there is still a great need for action at the international level to improve women's participation in all stages of peace making and peace building.

Now, what has been done and achieved by Switzerland? Concerning greater participation of women in peace building, Switzerland has defined four main lines of action, first, through its diplomacy, influence, the multilateral system, second, adopt national human resources policy, third, shape better gender-balanced peace policy programs, and fourth, support local women activity for peace and human rights.

Now, let me briefly illustrate each of these action lines. The first one, through its multilateral policy, Switzerland supports greater participation of women in international peace building efforts. This implies a commitment to a more balanced gender representation in international and regional organizations, in particular, a larger share of women in high-ranking posts.

Furthermore, greater participation of women is encouraged in the UN and OSE peace missions at both the institutional and field levels. These are the two organizations where Switzerland has a specific focus.

To obtain a larger share of women in high-ranking posts, at the UN, for example, remains, however, a challenge.

Today we will have the excellent opportunity to hear my colleague, Swiss Ambassador Heidi Tagliavini and her opinion about specific details of this challenge, how it can be approached to have higher posts given to women in the UN system, in particular.

Second line of action, through its human resources policy, Switzerland

deliberately promotes the equal participation or the goal of having equal participation of men and women in military and civilian peace building efforts. By implementing a targeted human resources policy, Switzerland aims to increase the share of women in the Swiss expert pool for civilian peace building.

Our first goal was 40 percent, and we have reached it in 2010 as for the first time we could see that 41 percent of all Swiss civilian experts deployed into bilateral and multilateral peace and human rights missions were women.

Now we are reaching for equality and for 50 percent.

Third, programs. Switzerland designs peace policy programs that promote women's participation in political processes and peace building efforts. Let me give you an example from the field. In March 2012, so, two months ago, Switzerland facilitated two meetings of the main Nepalese political parties to discuss contested aspects of the new draft constitution.

One disagreement concerned the right to nationality. Initially, the draft constitution did not attribute the same rights to men and women, but since we sponsored the meetings, we insisted that women had to be adequately represented in each delegation, and this led to the party finding a solution where equal rights for men and women were assured.

So, simply by us insisting that each delegation had women represented, the solution of equality could be pushed.

Now, the fourth example, empowering local women activities for peace and human rights, just a few words on that. The efforts to have a better gender balance in the government's response is one thing, but empowering local initiatives is also part of the equation of assuring that women can make a difference.

All over the world, as I speak, there are fantastic women who everyday

do make a difference through their personal engagement at the local and grassroots level of a conflict or post-conflict situation. To support and empower them is also part of Switzerland's strategy.

Ladies and gentlemen, the participation of women in any process that aims to bring about peace and social change is crucial.

Now, why do women make a difference? It is a fact and we have observed it over the years, that women often enjoy greater credibility and thus better access as the own experiences of our mediators and peace building advisors across the globe show. That is why, for example, in response to the Arab Spring, we decided to post women as responsible for our new transition support activities in Northern Africa, Tunisia, Libya, and Egypt, a region which is usually perceived as rather challenging for women.

I can tell you, the results are excellent and I could witness myself how much confidence women are able to generate when they talk to difficult partners.

Our latest example of how women can make a difference dates back from only two weeks ago and involves our human security advisor in Bamako, who is currently facilitating the resuming talks -- difficult talks between the government of Mali, which is an interim government, as I speak, and the Tuareg rebels of this country.

Thanks to her contacts in the field, she was also engaged in negotiating the liberation of a Swiss hostage that had been kidnapped by an Islamist group in Timbuktu. Her skills and stamina led to the successful release of the hostage after only ten days and without conditions.

This is a remarkable achievement of an extremely professional woman serving the peace policy of Switzerland in the region of Africa.

Thank you for your attention.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much, ambassador.

We turn now to Chaloka Bayani, who will address the issue from a different perspective, Chaloka.

MR. BAYANI: Thank you very much, Beth, as honorable chair, distinguished panelists, and guests. First of all, may I sincerely extend my thanks to you all for coming to join this important discussion today. I would like to extend particular gratitude to the Swiss government for its generous support of the IDP mandate thereby supporting the millions of internally displaced persons around the world.

The rights and well being of internally displaced women have been central to the IDP mandate since it was established 20 years ago.

The United Nations Human Rights Council has charged my mandate with the duty of integrating agenda perspective throughout its work and to give special consideration to the human rights of internally displaced women and their particular assistance, protection, and development needs.

My mandate therefore provides me with opportunities to devote careful attention to an issue that all too often gets lost or is overlooked.

As we all know, mainstreaming gender in crisis response, protection, and peace building is an ongoing challenge. I'm striving to mainstream gender perspectives in the work of my mandate in a number of ways.

As a key step in this direction, I have had focused discussions with internally displaced women during all of my missions and country visits, discussions with these women in countries such as Kenya, the Maldives, have provided valuable insights in the obstacles they face and the steps their states and the international community can take to respond more equitably and effectively to their concerns.

I've been deeply impressed by the tenacity and ingenuity of many IDP

women who have risen to the challenge displacement poses by developing new livelihoods and taking on important, if often unrecognized, leadership roles.

I'm also committed to integrating attention to gender in my thematic reports to the Human Rights Council.

Beyond these mainstreaming efforts, I've decided to make the situation of internally displaced women a priority for my mandate. By focusing on the rights and well being of internally displaced women, I hope to draw increased attention to this issue and to help to identify opportunities for synergies and improve mainstreaming strategies.

In cooperation with the Brookings-LSE Project on Internal Displacement, I'm also supporting new research into critical challenges facing internally displaced women. For example, we are currently preparing a study on gender, displacement and livelihoods. This project will support efforts to promote sustainable livelihoods for IDP women by exploring the specific barriers faced by them during and after their displacement.

In particular, it will examine how efforts to restore access to new livelihoods may advance gender equity and support internally displaced women as agents of positive change. Through these case studies of efforts to promote IDP livelihoods in the Philippines, Cote d'Ivoire and Azerbaijan, this study will investigate the potential contributions innovative livelihood initiatives may make to peace building and reconstruction processes and the pursuit of durable solutions to displacement.

Too often we talk about internally displaced women as if they are a homogenous group overlooking the different concerns they may face depending on, for example, their stage of life.

In this study and in other research on internally displaced women that my mandate will support, we will work to bring in focus the needs and concerns of young,

middle aged, elderly women, as well as women with disabilities to better understand how different strategies may address the needs and rights of women at different stages of life and conditions.

We will also consider how the efficacy of protection relief and recovery interventions varies depending on the roles women occupy in their families. I look forward to sharing the results of this research with you in the upcoming year.

As part of my prior focus on IDP women, I have also strengthened my mandate's engagement with the UN committee on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women and I'm contributing to the development of CEDO's general recommendation on the protection of women in armed conflict and post-conflict situations.

I held a meeting with CEDO in December 2011 and in March this year to discuss this issue and presented them with a draft report as regards the content of their general recommendation.

I will also be participating in their regional consultation on this issue in Istanbul on May 11th where we hope that after all the regional consultations they've had, then the process of elaborating the general recommendation will begin.

In my interactions with CEDO, I have emphasized the value of the provisions on the protection of IDP women sent forth in the guiding principles on internal displacement on issues including nondiscrimination, protection from sexual and gender-based violence, and the particular health needs of internally displaced women.

The guiding principles also address the participation of internally displaced women in decision making and relief processes, which is essential to the effective protection of women in conflict and post-conflict contexts.

I have also stressed that while sexual and gender-based violence is

often used as a tactic to force civilians to flee their homes, displacement can also heighten vulnerability to further attacks and increase displaced women's socioeconomic insecurity including vulnerability to trafficking and smuggling. This is happening, for example, in Somalia and to some extent Haiti, in more recent times.

So, improving physical, legal, and socioeconomic security for IDP women will require a more prolonged effort. An essential part of this effort must be to reverse the culture of impunity that prevails in many parts of the world where sexual and gender-based violence is rampant.

I think we have witnessed how the indictments of the vice-president of the Congo Bemba at the ICC covers essentially sexual and gender-based violence. We have also seen that the indictments against the accused persons for displacement in Kenya, one deputy prime minister or former deputy prime minister, one minister, a journalist, and others have also focused on sexual violence and displacement.

So, issues of impunity are being addressed in that context and my mandate will keep an eye on these developments to make sure that this correlation between development, ending impunity, and also providing protection to IDP women.

Internally displaced women must also be able to actively access justice systems. At the same time, IDP women and families stand to benefit from training programs and other forms of livelihood support. As experiences around the world have told us, we cannot improve the security of IPD women without also addressing their legal and economic security.

Some such developments to that end have taken place in the Great Lakes region where under the auspices of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, I think the world's first agreement of protocol on this oppression and elimination, punishment of sexual violence has been adopted at a great effect and

supplemented also by a protocol on the appropriate rights, which has a gender dimension.

My mandate is now working with the secretariat of the International Conference on the Great Lakes on implementing those agreements in collaboration with the recently established center on gender-based violence in Uganda as of December last year to make sure that the issue of impunity, as well as addressing the legal situation of IDP women, is fully brought to book.

As the theme of today's events suggest, one of the critical issues requiring our attention is how women who are internally displaced can be more effectively integrated into peace building processes. The ambassador has spoken of Security Council Resolution 1325, but given the current situation, for example, in Sudan, South Sudan, Cote d'Ivoire, Nepal, and Afghanistan, to name a few, it is clear that much more work remains to be done.

As social protection structures break down, women and children account for the overwhelming majority of those who are internally displaced in conflict situations and they bear the brunt of war, so they are among those who have the most to gain from the processes of peace and justice.

The particular needs and vulnerabilities of IDP women need to be addressed through human rights based responses during the emergency and recovery and development stages in line with the guiding principles on internal displacement. But women should not just be seen as people in need of assistance or as objects, as it were. They play positive roles as transmitters of culture and history to their children and as agents to ensure the protection of their communities during displacement.

Women often take responsibilities traditionally undertaken by men as the men go to fight or as they escape forced recruitment, which can be a burden to them

physically and psychologically and may present problems in the context of post-conflict when men expect to revert to the status quo or if women are widowed and face long-term issues or discrimination as a result.

These are the issues that the Great Lakes Protocol on the appropriate rights of returning persons attempts to deal with in the context of women.

Many women serve as informal leaders in their communities and are well placed to ensure that the needs of vulnerable groups are considered in distribution of food and other relief. In the Democratic Republic of Congo and Colombia, for example, women were able to negotiate such agreements directly with militia groups on such issues as the passage of humanitarian aid. And where possible, internally displaced women should have the opportunity to play meaningful and not token roles in shaping and monitoring peace-building processes whether through the Track 1 or Track 2 processes.

Guiding principle number 22 asserts the rights of IDPs to political participation while principle 28 paragraph 2 states that special efforts should be made to ensure the full participation of IDP persons in the planning and management of their return or resettlement.

However, for the most part, we have yet to witness the sustain and effective participation of IDPs in peace processes. The effective engagement of IDP women has been even more lackluster. There are many reasons why IDPs have not participated in most peace processes, including difficulties in determining which leaders represent IDPs, and I found out that in my missions, IDP communities have fairly effective leadership elected by IDPs, but there is no system of periodic elections. They are usually permanent leaders. And at the same time, women do not find themselves in positions of leadership even within IDP communities, and this is something that my

mandate is striving to change so that women also become part of the leadership of IDP communities.

There are also issues to do with the risk of IDPs being politically engaged, fears that IDPs will be spoilers of peace processes, and often the reluctance of conflicting parties to include them in negotiations.

However, there are ways for independent media to include the concerns of IDPs including IDP women in peace processes. There is a direct link between addressing internal displacement and achieving lasting peace, so consultations with displaced populations, including IDP women, is critical in addition to the effective implementation and monitoring of peace agreements.

The particular avenue of hope for greater attention to the specific needs of women and for their participation in decisions relating to their protection assistance lies in the African Union Convention for the Protection Of and Assistance to Internally Displaced Person, in Africa, also known as the Kampala Convention. Through my mandate I'm working to support the ratification and implementation of this agreement, which breaks new ground as the first binding regional convention on IDPs.

The more recent state to ratify this has been Nigeria, and this time we are taking care to ensure that the instruments of ratification are actually depositors, and I think the Office of the United Nations High Commission for the Refuges is flying two legal officers from Nigeria to the AU to physically deposit the instruments and because some of them have been lost in transit, such as those from Somalia, which makes the task a little bit difficult.

Once the Kampala Convention enters in force, all states' parties will be legally bound to integrate the provisions laid out in the Convention in their domestic laws. This includes provisions addressing the protection and assistance needs of women,

including female heads of households, pregnant mothers, and those with young children.

Another avenue that has opened up for the implementation of the Kampala Convention is the gathering of the International Parliamentary Union, whose meeting I attended in Kampala to speak to several parliaments, those from Africa to keep an eye on the ratification of the Kampala Convention, and those from around the world, to make sure that parliaments have sectional committees on human rights, which also have oversight in relation to IDPs. And I should say that this made great progress and many parliaments and speakers were interested in this and working with UNHCR, we have now a roadmap on how to engage with parliaments through the International Parliamentary Union, which is also interested in this exercise.

Particularly relevant to our discussion today, the Kampala Convention requires that states allow IDPs to participate in decisions relating to their protection and assistance in terms of Article 92 and to endeavor to incorporate the relevant principles contained in the convention into peace negotiations and agreements for the purpose of finding sustainable solutions to the problem of internal displacement.

Civil society, through NGOs, women's groups, and national human rights institutions, and now parliaments, as well as regional entities on the continent, and international partners, must work together to ensure these provisions become a reality for internally displaced women, including by striving to hold states accountable for their legal obligations under the Kampala Convention.

In order to deepen my mandate's engagement on the issues facing internally displaced women and strengthen responses to their needs throughout the UN system, I plan to convene an expert workshop on internally displaced women in the fall of this year. I will also develop a report on this issue for submission to the Human Rights Council in 2013 with a view to highlighting the progress that has been made on this issue

and raising states' awareness of the important work that remains to be done so that the rights and needs of displaced women are effectively addressed. And the contributions they can make in the pursuit of peace should also be maximized.

I look forward to engaging in these activities with the supporters of my mandate in the United States, in Switzerland, Norway, Austria, and others around the world, and to ensure that the concerns facing internally displaced women receive the attention they deserve. I thank you very much.

(Applause)

MS. FERRIS: Thank you, Chaloka. We turn now to Heidi to tell us, perhaps, some of your personal experiences in peace mediation efforts.

MS. TAGLIAVINI: Thank you, Madam Chairperson and thank you for the opportunity to take part in this public discussion at the Brookings Institution.

The role of women in conflict situations is a topic which is particularly dear to me as I have spent almost 20 years of my past years in diplomacy in conflict situations, mostly in the Caucuses north and south, and as well in the Balkans.

In all these years, I was mainly engaged in the field of peace negotiations and peacekeeping operations for the UN and the OSE. I started as a simple member of peace keeping missions and ended up in leadership positions, but I went through all the difficulties and prejudices women face when engaging in conflict settlement.

I learned how patient and persistent, how principled, competent, and flexible a woman has to be, not only to survive, but also to make the small difference to keep a conflict from sliding back into open hostilities.

In all my assignments in peace missions, the fact that I was a woman was always somewhat unusual, and of course, not always welcome. But eventually it

paid off, both for me personally, but as well, for those who gave me the mandates.

What are women doing differently or better than men is a question I'm often asked when we discuss the particular role of women in conflict environments, and here I need to make a note of caution. Women do not automatically make a difference or have a different approach than men, but some qualities, usually attributed to women, may be crucial, especially in circumstances of a conflict or in a peace process.

Of course, I'm tempted to tell you about my very first experience in a peace mission in Chechnya as it is the most telling example about all the sometimes ridiculous difficulties women may face in the context of peace missions, but I refrain from doing so as it would probably take too much time.

Instead, I would rather elaborate on what I would call the set of personal and professional requirements for a woman to succeed in a peace mission, especially when we talk about leadership positions.

Here is the list of what I think you really need when working in a conflict environment. First, and foremost, comes integrity. In peace missions, a woman in a top position is closely watched and observed at all times. In general, women in peace missions face more skepticism and suspicion than men in the same jobs.

In the volatile environment of a conflict where nobody trusts anybody, the integrity of a woman head of mission is a key requirement.

Credibility is the other key word closely linked to integrity. You may be a good negotiator, but if at the same time you are not credible, I mean, if you are not reliable in terms of confidentiality, or if you are a compromised chief of your mission -- for example, a bad or an unfair manager, or a person who is politically or morally not clean, or if you are not modest, it inevitably fires back.

Your interlocutors need to be sure that what you tell them during your

meetings is also what you believe and what you will do. And if they trust you and tell you something in confidence outside the official meetings, you must honor their confidence and not betray them.

Sometimes, they do it on purpose to test you. Stick to the simple truth. Your counterparts in any peace process are much better connected than you, they know much more than you about the history of the conflict and about their counterparts on the other side, and also, they very quickly know everything about you. Don't ever cheat them; it's the beginning of your end in any peace process.

Common sense is what you need most in the fragile environment of a conflict. Who, if not you, will be reasonable when everybody around you is excited and emotional about the smallest incident? In all your thinking, in all your assessments, in all your decisions, at all time, you need to demonstrate common sense. It helps to de-escalate the situation and to come up with reasonable proposals.

Intuition is a precious tool in any peace process. This is where women may have an advantage over men. If you can sense whether your interlocutor is honest or not in what he proposes, it helps. A woman may feel whether it is dangerous for her peacekeepers to take a certain road rather than another, just because she may, by intuition, be more cautious or take fewer risks.

I am speaking about intuition combined with the ability to listen to good advice. You need to have a keen sense of when it is time to do certain things and when not to do them. This may save your life or the lives of your mission members.

Intuition may also mean that you have an understanding for your counterparts in the peace process. This suggests respect, which is always helpful.

And flexibility is essential. In peace missions, one needs to be unbelievably flexible. This goes as much for the living conditions, which are often rather

precarious, as for the frequently changing political and security environment. You need to adapt quickly to any new situation and to be on top of the events in no time and in totally different environments and different tasks.

And you need stamina, stamina and endurance. Peace operations are hardly ever conducted in a normal environment. Your ability to cope easily with a difficult environment, with difficult people and difficult tasks, will eventually determine if you are really able to cope with your job.

You also need is a solid physical condition and a sound mind and good mental and emotional health. Peace missions are really a tough school. They take all your strength.

If you want to achieve something in the peace process, you need to be persistent and consistent, but not in a fanatic way. Fanaticism is, in any way, absolutely forbidden. If you are not reasonable, who else will be in the emotionally loaded environment of a conflict? Just don't let anybody push you aside. Quietly and persistently do your job. In German we would call it, (Speaking German). And you need to be consistent in pursuing your aim, (Speaking German), again, a very accurate German expression.

But at the same time you need to be modest and reasonable. Don't ever triumph when you manage to win a battle. In the peace process, everything is fragile.

And to be taken seriously as a woman in a leadership position, you need to be really competent and show that you know as much or better more than your male colleagues, otherwise you risk to provoke the usual gender stereotype reaction and the peace process you are leading may suffer from it.

In peace negotiations, you also need patience and have what I would call a relaxed distance, (Speaking German) again, another German expression that says it

exactly. A peace process is a long and arduous endeavor. In the conflict over Abkhazia in Georgia, keeping a fragile stability or a status quo, in the four years when I was the UN special representative and head of mission, it was a constant challenge and a tremendous effort to keep that fragile stability. Yet, to the outside world, it looked like almost nothing.

“What did you achieve?” was the usual question of journalists back home. “Well, we managed to keep stability and to prevent the recurrence of war,” I used to say, only to hear in response, “Not very much, is it?” Had these journalists known what this meant in terms of alertness or endless patience and the constant readiness to speak to everybody at any time of the day or night, to go to places of ambushes and attacks at night and to see sometimes horrible things, they might have changed their attitude. But status quo or fragile stability is no news.

In peace missions, you also need to be able to listen. Talk to everybody, listen to everybody, and treat everybody equally, even if at times you would prefer not to do so. And don't accept any criticism when somebody argues that you met with X, Y, or Z, who are the bad guys. In a conflict environment, it is your job to see and talk to everybody. It's your privilege but also your duty to talk to all the stakeholders for the sake of objectivity and impartiality.

Don't forget, the loser of today may be the winner of tomorrow. Impartiality is the key word par excellence in any peace process, even if at times it is very difficult to remain impartial. We all have our preferences and aversions, but be aware that your credibility is at stake if you don't stick to the rule of impartiality.

As a leader in a peace mission, you also need to have sufficient resolve to take decisions, taking into consideration all the risks and dangers involved. This may also mean that you make mistakes and consequently bear the responsibility for your

decision. In peace processes, there are no easy solutions.

One of my predecessors in a UN mission sent a helicopter to a particularly dangerous area as requested by the mandate. One party to the conflict had warned him of the imminent danger, but he thought he had to comply with the mandate. The helicopter was shot down with peacekeepers on board. No one survived. It is very difficult to continue to live and work after such a disaster; therefore, don't be overzealous. (Speaking French), as the French philosopher Talleyrand would have said. "You may take unnecessary risks if you are overambitious."

And, very important, if you engage in peace missions, you need to know your weak and your strong points. If you don't know or don't want to know them, they may eventually fire back. In other words, you need to be able to look into the mirror without being afraid of what you see. If not, your counterparts in the conflict will be only too happy to show you the mirror, usually not to your advantage.

Another key word on my list is accountability. Be aware that you will need to account for each and every step. Don't cheat. In the long run it doesn't work.

And last, but not least, be aware that any person in a leading position, but especially a woman leader in a peace mission, you will be closely watched at all times -- how you look like, smiling, tired, nervous, relaxed, how you dress -- the dress check is usually merciless, especially if it comes from other women -- and how you will react in critical or dangerous situations. As a leader, please note, you have to demonstrate self-assurance and self control at all times. You set the tone. The others will accept and follow you.

What helped me personally was discipline, discipline as a lifestyle. Of course, you need to take your tasks seriously, but take time for yourself, have enough sleep, even if it is not always easy, eat enough, and regularly, have regular exercise, and,

most essential, don't lose contact with culture and nature. They are an endless source of recreation and balance. And also, no excesses, such as hard drinks, for example, which is such a part of the way of life in the different conflict regions where I served.

Apart from the fact that even if you drink to please your partners in the conflict who push you to drink, they will judge you consequently, and on top of it, it is very hard to survive in this tough job with bad surprises all the time if you are not fit.

I think I will stop here because my list could go on, but I don't want to continue.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MS. FERRIS: Thank you. We turn now to Carla Koppell.

MS. KOPPELL: Thank you so much. I feel like maybe I should cede my time to Ambassador Tagliavini so she can tell us the story of Chechnya because when you said I was going to tell it but now I'm not going to tell it, I mean, that just makes us all want to hear it all the more.

Thank you so much to Brookings, to the Swiss government, for having me here today. The conversation is one that's close to my heart for a couple of reasons. The first is, obviously, I've invested a lot of time over the last decade or so in really pushing for women's inclusion and attention to women's issues in peace processes.

The other is because I think I occupy a fairly unique role in that I was working for -- as was mentioned -- the Institute for Inclusive Security, which did a lot of work in different ways but one of its primary activities was advocacy, and what we were pushing for was how to drive this agenda forward, how to foster the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and other related resolutions, and had a colleague, when Secretary Clinton announced in December of 2010 that the U.S. was going to -- or,

it was not December, October in conjunction with the anniversary of the resolution -- that the U.S. was going to create a National Action Plan, a colleague literally went out and brought a bottle of champagne into our conference room and opened the champagne and said, oh, my god, finally the U.S. is going to create a National Action Plan.

And we all toasted, and not even six months later I was invited into the government to work intimately on the process of putting together that National Action Plan.

So, to me it's quite personal that not only the U.S. do a good job with its National Action Plan -- better late than never -- but that it not only be an important plan, but one that really gains traction within the U.S. government, because there are lots of pieces of paper and all of us having worked with international organizations and various governments know that those pieces of paper can have a great deal of import or very little import, depending on the extent to which they're brought to life and they're really animated in that process.

So, I wanted to just talk a little bit about where we are, give you that context, and what the challenges are and what we're trying to achieve in implementing the National Action Plan within the United States government.

Now, the plan itself was released this past December by Secretary Clinton, but what accompanied it was a Presidential Executive Order signed by President Obama that really directed its implementation, and that was a very intentional choice, because the goal was to make this as sticky as possible, so it wasn't just a national plan that existed in response to a UN mandate. It actually was signed by the President for implementation and driving that forward.

And, interestingly, that was something that was particularly important to the Department of Defense, and really calling on our Commander in Chief to mandate the

introduction of issues related to women, peace, and security, whether their issues related to women's leadership in peace processes or the responsiveness of peace processes to women's priorities and needs, writ large, into all doctrine that was being adopted by various departments and agencies, but doctrine, in particular, is significant for the Department of Defense.

One of the key founding principles for the National Action Plan, and really for my entry into government to work on the National Action Plan, was that we looked at it as an issue about doing a better job with our defense, diplomatic and development efforts writ large.

So, there is an enormously compelling case for why this is the right thing to do and it is the appropriate thing to do, but from my perspective it was absolutely essential that it also be something that was viewed as mission essential and really about doing a better job with U.S. foreign policy.

And I remember before the UN women analysis came out that was cited earlier talking about the extreme marginalization of women in peace processes that was cited earlier, there used to be a debate about, you know, what is the appropriate percentage of women's participation in peace negotiations or different stages of peace processes, and there'd be heated arguments, you know, is it 30, is it 40, and I would go into meetings with policymakers and they would say, well, you know, I mean, we shouldn't -- how can you ask for parity? I mean, we need to get the numbers up. Maybe it's not so important. Maybe it's not so bad.

Well, when the numbers came out that said it was 3 percent, the debate went away, because I think it was difficult for people to argue that 3 percent was the right number. That probably looked like it was a little bit small.

So, the U.S. National Action Plan mirrors UN Security Council Resolution

1325 in having four pillars related to the engagement of women in conflict prevention in negotiations as participants in relief in recovery efforts and in being more responsive to their needs across the conflict spectrum.

But it does a couple of things that I think are worth highlighting within the context of this conversation. The first is a very explicit decision was made for that National Action Plan to also encompass humanitarian relief in situations of humanitarian disaster rather than just conflict, and there was -- and that is certainly relevant to some of the issues that have been raised today and is a critical component of how we're approaching work within the U.S. Agency for International Development.

The second is that it encompasses a focus on countering trafficking in persons as an explicit component of the work that's undertaken and how we combat that trafficking in persons as part and parcel of the work we're doing as a development agency, but also as part and parcel of the work that we do in contributing to peacekeeping missions and peacekeeping operations around the world.

The fifth pillar of the U.S. National Action Plan is around integration and institutionalization of the Women, Peace, and Security mandate in our processes and all of our programs moving forward and USAID in particular -- and I should say the State Department as well -- have really focused on moving that agenda forward assiduously even as we craft a mandated implementation plan for the National Action Plan.

So, the National Action Plan is the U.S. government umbrella document. Both the Plan and the Presidential Executive Order ask for USAID, the Department of Defense, and the Department of State to craft implementation plans so that we drill down beyond the sort of general rhetoric of an all of government process to say, okay, who's actually going to be accountable for making this real within these critical departments and agencies.

But while we're crafting that implementation plan, which will come out later this year, we have also done things like release an updated gender equality and female empowerment policy within USAID, which revises what was a 30-year-old policy.

Our policy is accompanied by the first ever directive on gender integration within the Department of State, and what that means is we're really trying to institutionalize the commitment to this agenda and integrate it into the work that we're doing writ large around the world, and those directives and those policies are really critical for gaining traction and having the kind of trickle down that we want to see.

The second is additional counter trafficking in persons policy, which was released in late February, and, again, is really about how we make these commitments real and how we translate them into the bureaucratic structures and organizations that we have in place.

So, we're currently hard at work on this implementation plan and specifically what we've done is ask now our field missions all to think about how does this plan become real within the context of their programs on the ground.

So, if a field mission is focused on economic development, promoting democratization and rule of law and environmental sector programs, and it is a fragile state, how does this agenda get woven into the work that's going on in all of those areas, whether it's from a perspective as women of agents of change and agents of stability and promoting stability, or whether it's from the perspective of what women's and girl's priorities and needs are and how we need to be specifically responsive to those priorities and needs in rolling out our programs so that deliver results for development and for the advancement of security and stability objectives?

So, that process is ongoing and what we'll do is get all of this mass of planning and visioning from around the world and roll that into what will be our

implementation plan with the addition of components that are agency-wide components.

So, how does this unfold across the agency as a whole?

But we wanted to make sure that in the implementation planning process, we were beginning to enable people to think about this agenda creatively and within the process of their core planning and the work that goes on longer term. And what we envision, incidentally, is that this does not become a stand-alone process that continues as a stovepipe next to the other work that we do, but rather that it becomes an integral part of the way that we do work.

So, if you look at the counter trafficking in persons policy, if you look at the gender equality and female empowerment policy, an emphasis on conflict in fragile states is embedded in those, and when we talk about the gender policy, we talk about the National Action Plan and Women, Peace, and Security, and we talk about the counter-trafficking policy, so that they are synergistic and complementary and they roll out as one and create the kind of momentum that makes these policies and programs endure for the long-term.

Let me close with a couple of takeaways. There are, first of all, two things that I would say that are really essential to our success. One is that people within the government and outside honestly believe that this is about doing our job better, so this is not a splinter issue, a sideline, or something that is good to do because it makes sense, but they're doing it because they understand that they will achieve better results, that the U.S. government will achieve better results for its investment in this agenda.

The second is, that we all understand collectively that models now exist around the world for doing this and that we are simply promulgating, replicating, and broadening the application of existent successful models for better handling issues related to women, peace, and security worldwide. And I say that this is important

because too often there's a feeling that anybody who is taking on this agenda is going out on a limb and taking a risk and moving forward something which has never been done before. And what we have to understand collectively is that that's not the case.

As we heard, the Swiss government has experienced -- successful experience to show for having brought women into the process, and this has yielded dividends. But there are examples from around the world that we can turn to, from Guatemala to Northern Ireland to Kenya to Sudan to Somalia. Many places where women have been brought into peace processes with results for the responsiveness of those peace processes to the needs of people on the ground and with benefits for the processes themselves.

And there is first person testimony to support this. And we need to be, in some ways, emissaries for delivering that message and delivering it in ways that lower the perceived risk of moving this agenda forward.

So, I'll close with the two challenges I've faced in moving this agenda forward within the U.S. government. The first is the need for us to permeate the all levels within our organizations to make people understand why this is important and really believe it in ways that gain traction for the long-term, because right now there are a lot of discussions around this agenda and I think that there's a great deal of momentum behind it, but what really makes a difference is if it sticks, if we see the transformation in behavior in ways that endure long-term.

The second challenge that we face within USAID, and I think this is true in the State Department and Department of Defense as well, is enabling people to operationalize this agenda moving forward. It's very -- relatively rare that I have people say to me, this doesn't make sense. Now, they're saying it to me, so maybe they wouldn't tell me it doesn't make sense, and that's possible, but I think a large and

growing percentage of people actually believe that this is an important agenda and one that needs to move forward. And they may have a variety of motives for why they believe that to be true.

Very few of them are able to operationalize. That question of how you make this real and drive this process forward on the ground, in programs in every sector of the work that USAID does, in every peace agreement, as was described to us, which is fragile, which is difficult, which requires a real balancing act -- this is not easy work.

And all of these people in all of these sectors are facing sets of competing priorities and what we need to do collectively as a set of allies is buy down, is reduce the learning curve to make it easier, to make it more practical and possible for people to achieve the goals that we're seeking to achieve without having to relearn everything from Point A in order to get to Point Z, and so that's very much what we're focused on now as we implement the National Action Plan within the U.S. government, making it possible, easy, durable, and sustainable.

So, with that, I'll turn the floor back over to you.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much, Clara.

(Applause)

MS. FERRIS: I think we'll go ahead and open it up for questions from the audience, and if you could -- there will be microphones that will magically appear in your hands and if you could identify yourself, and feel free to either address a question to a particular panelist or in general.

I'll take the woman right here on the aisle first.

MS. KLEIN: Andrea Klein. I'm a development staff member for several small nonprofits, community and faith-based. What are you doing or what policies do you have in place in working with NGOs, especially with regard to cultural education? And

what are the practices that you have in place so the services that we provide are in line with what --organizations that are in the conflict?

MS. FERRIS: Okay, other questions? I think we'll take several. Yes, the gentleman in the back and then the gentleman at the front.

SPEAKER: Thank you very much. My name is (inaudible). I'm the special operations division -- head of the special operations division of (inaudible) Africa, 2017 Project Taskforce.

I would like (inaudible) for what you are doing. What I would like to suggest is that you should join us in a campaign to get -- particularly in Africa -- to get civic education and the ratification of the African Union charter on democracy, good governance, free elections. Because if you do that, then you will not be having to deal with this issue more -- because the women will vote the government out when there's elections.

So, please, you see me here with this baseball cap and the map of Africa, come up and say you want to be involved in that initiative, otherwise you'll be doing this all the time. You're not going to solve any problems.

MS. FERRIS: Thank you very much. Yes, the gentleman here.

SPEAKER: My name is (inaudible) and I am from Pakistan. My English is not good, but I try to speak something.

I want to say about my Hindu (inaudible) woman's community there. We have no marriage act, divorce act, inheritance (inaudible) deciding the problems about our own culture, and we have no education system there including technical education, nothing education. Besides there are so many Christian institutions which is funded by the missionaries and so many (inaudible) and so many other (inaudible) and (inaudible) funding institutions, but we are suffering from so many problems, which is relating to

woman conflicts.

So, what you can do in the rehabilitation of my Hindu community, especially there, which is suffering from so many?

MS. FERRIS: Okay, let's take a question here.

MS. HAMIDI: Thank you. Rangina Hamidi. I'm from Afghanistan. I've heard great things about you, Carla, but I work with your colleague -- the colleagues now at Inclusive Security.

I was in Afghanistan for nine years and, in fact, was forced out of the country for stability/insecurity situation because it became impossible to live and work in an environment that was so volatile.

I feel guilty because I had to make that choice, but the presenter who talked about credibility, you know, this is a point that I've personally addressed also is that when it comes to regions where warlords and drug lords and basically men who are in charge of the region with guns and power, they're not very much credible in the sense of defining credibility, but when it comes to women, we always force them and encourage them that they have to take that extra step or those few extra steps to prove themselves.

And, you know, just from the ground experience I'm just frustrated with that because a lot of the men who are making the trouble on the ground, they don't have any credibility to be doing that, yet they don't have to prove themselves.

So, I just want more comments, more discussion around that issue in particular.

MS. FERRIS: Okay, we can turn to the panelists now. We have questions on working with NGOs and culture, questions on joining a campaign in Africa to address some of the causes that lead to conflicts and displacement, a particular question about how to deal with communities in Pakistan where women are disadvantaged and

educational opportunities are lacking, and one of the questions of credibility in terms of why women have to prove their credibility when men who are causing trouble are exempt.

Who would like to begin? Don't feel like you have to answer them all. You get to pick and choose. Carla, do you want to start?

MS. KOPPELL: Sure, I can start. First of all, I wanted to recognize Rangina because Rangina is actually an incredible Afghan woman leader who was one of the first people that linked women to some of the military forces in Afghanistan and really brought women's voices to the fore, so I want to recognize her.

(Applause)

MS. KOPPELL: So, the -- with regard to local organizations, I think, first of all, there's a broader push around increasing the work with local organizations within USAID as part of a suite of reforms called USAID Forward to increase the extent to which we are engaging local entities, and to give you one specific example, I was, just the other day, talking about a project on women's leadership in Senegal where women are using radio broadcasting to increase their role in politics, so I can answer two birds with one --

(Interruption)

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