



# PRIO

## The Missing Peace Symposium 2013

Sexual Violence in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings

PRIO Gender, Peace and Security Update

Issue 1 2013

The PRIO Gender Peace and Security Update is an electronic newsletter launched by PRIO's Gender Team in response to growing interest among the public for information about women, peace and security issues. The newsletter will keep readers informed of the latest developments both internationally and in Norway in relation to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security and subsequent resolutions.



From left: Melanne Vermeer, former Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, US Department of State, Zainab Hawa Bangura, SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and Kathleen Kuehnast, USIP. Photo: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2013.

Organized by the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), the Human Rights Center at Berkeley Law, Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI North America), and the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO), the Missing Peace Symposium 2013 on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Post Conflict Settings took place on 14-16 February 2013 at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Washington, DC, United States.

The symposium brought together more than 200 academics, practitioners and policy makers from around the world to discuss sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings. Special guest speakers included Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) on Sexual

Violence in Conflict; Melanne Vermeer, former Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, US Department of State, now Director of the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security; Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Jody Williams, Chair, Nobel Women's Initiative & Co-chair, International Campaign to Stop Rape & Gender Violence in Conflict; and Ms. Patricia Sellers J.D., Special Advisor on International Criminal Law Prosecution Strategies for the International Criminal Court.

In her keynote address, SRSG Bangura stressed how "addressing conflict-related sexual violence ultimately must be about preventing it from happening," and highlighted the importance of combating impunity for perpetrators in order to prevent sexual violence. Referring to the

provisions outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 1960 (2010) on the naming and shaming of countries where sexual violence is taking place, she said: “Now the word is out: if you commit this crime, we will investigate you, we will prosecute you, and we will punish you. There is no hiding place.” She further emphasized the importance of remembering that also men and boys are victims of sexual violence. You can read SRSG Bangura’s keynote address in full [here](#).

### The goals of the three-day global symposium were to:

- Take stock of current sexual and gender-based violence policies and programming lessons of national governments, civil society organizations, and international organizations;
- Exchange information among researchers, policy makers, and practitioners about the latest research efforts related to causes, scope and patterns of sexual violence;
- Strengthen the community of knowledge and practice beyond disciplinary and state boundaries;
- Identify how to improve research and documentation capacity and new areas for research and policy action.

What became clear over the three-day symposium is that sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict contexts is more documented, analyzed and addressed than ever before. This development can be primarily attributed to an amplified attention by new stakeholders rather than new documentation that might suggest an increase in or the discovery of new patterns in the incidence of this particular form of violence. The overall aim of the engagement on this issue by international organizations, national governments, the NGO community, researchers, and others is a benign wish to improve the situation for victims and survivors of this kind of violence on the ground.

The way to do this, however, is by no means straightforward because the reasons for, as well as the impact of, sexual violence in times of conflict and post-

conflict are multifaceted and diverse, as was pointed out by several symposium participants. Prescribing remedies that would fit all situations is therefore difficult, and any attempt to create policies, interventions, and programs to address sexual violence in armed conflict and its aftermath must therefore be attuned to the cultural and situational context in which such violence occurs. This point was raised several times, particularly by representatives from Latin American countries.

The increased documentation of the harm experienced by sexual violence victims and survivors has been of the utmost importance in bringing the issue of sexual violence to the attention of decision-makers on peace and security issues. But this effort might have come at the cost of attention and policies directed at those who commit these crimes, i.e. perpetrators. It is therefore crucial that while the efforts to combat sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings maintains a strong focus on victims’ and survivors’ needs, an increased focus on how to prevent perpetrators from committing this kind of violence needs to be developed.

Preventing perpetrators from committing acts of sexual violence is the only way to effectively combat such violence in armed conflict, and there was much emphasis on this point throughout several of the panel discussions at the symposium.

The Young Scholar network is a new initiative launched at the symposium. It aims at supporting PhD candidates and recently minted PhDs in their research and the dissemination of research results to the practitioner and policy communities. Some of the most innovative research on sexual violence is being undertaken by young scholars who spend months in the field researching, analyzing and writing about the complex and difficult aspects of understanding and preventing sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict settings. These scholars are frequently on the cutting edge of data collection methodologies and have important insights to share with the broader academic and policy communities.

However, young scholars often face challenges in disseminating the results of their research to the mainstream international relations and security studies communities. In addition, they may lack the necessary networks to disseminate



**Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Jody Williams, Chair, Nobel Women’s Initiative & Co-chair, International Campaign to Stop Rape & Gender Violence in Conflict, giving her keynote address. Photo: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2013.**



**Panel Three: Perpetrating Sexual Violence. Panel moderated by Inger Skjelsbæk (on the left), Deputy Director at PRIO and member of the Symposium Steering Group. Photo: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2013.**

among scholars and practitioners (see featured story in [PRIO Gender, Peace and Security Update 4, 2012](#)). ■

## PRIO Policy Briefs on Sexual Violence

**PRIO and the Centre for the Study of Civil War** have recently published a number of policy briefs on the topic of conflict-related sexual violence. *Sexual Violence in African Conflicts, 1989-2009* (CSCW Policy Brief 02/2012), written by Ragnhild Nordås and Dara Kay Cohen, outlines key trends in conflict-related sexual violence in 33 African countries, challenging conventional wisdom on the topic.

**In addition**, two policy briefs focus on how to go from protection to prevention of sexual violence in war: In *Preventing Conflict-related Sexual Violence* (PRIO Policy Brief 02/2013), Ragnhild Nordås outlines several routes to prevent conflict-related sexual violence, such as changing norms, creating safer spaces, improving reporting, ending impunity, assuring accountability and mitigating sexual violence after war. In *Preventing Perpetrators* (PRIO Policy Brief 03/2013), Inger Skjelsbæk offers an assessment of the possibilities of moving from a victim-centred focus to a perpetrator-centred focus when discussing sexual violence. Skjelsbæk suggests three decisive approaches to achieve a shift towards an emphasis on prevention, focusing on the individual level, the group level and the cultural level.

Read also: *Sexual Violence by Militias in African Conflicts* (CSCW Policy Brief 01/2012) by Ragnhild Nordås and Dara Day Cohen, and *Sexual Violence on the Decline?* by Ragnhild Nordås (CSCW Policy Brief 03/2012). ■

their work to the policy and practitioner communities. Hopefully, the Young Scholars Network will help overcome these challenges.

**PRIO's Deputy Director**, Inger Skjelsbæk, was member of the Symposium Steering Group and was directly involved in the organization and moderation of several panels. Senior Researcher Ragnhild Nordås also took part as a panellist, and PRIO director Kristian Berg Harpviken spoke after the conference at a reception hosted by PRIO. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was among the sponsors of the symposium, including the Young Scholars Network and the conference reception.

**During the event** it was possible to follow the Symposium on Twitter, and it was also streamed live on the USIP website. Recordings will soon be made available for those interested. For this and more, please visit the [USIP Symposium Website](#). We can also inform our readers that plans for a second symposium are in the making, and this will hopefully take place in Nairobi, Kenya, next year. ■

## Special Report on Wartime Sexual Violence

**On the occasion of the Missing Peace Symposium**, a special report was launched by Dara Kay Cohen, Amelia Hoover Green, and Elisabeth Jean Wood titled *Wartime Sexual Violence: Misconceptions, Implications, and Ways Forward*.

**This special report** was launched to mark the first convening of the Missing Peace Symposium on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings. The report summarizes ten major misconceptions about wartime sexual violence, highlighting both advances and gaps in our knowledge. Drawing on social science research, it outlines for policymakers the current state of knowledge about wartime sexual violence, details gaps in existing knowledge, and explores the implications of these findings for policymaking. The report refutes many of the claims made in the Human Security Report 2012, which created a large debate

## Conference on the application of UNSCR 1325 in Cyprus

On 9 December 2012, the Gender Advisory Team (GAT) in Cyprus organized a conference on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the region.



Opening panel at the Gender Advisory Team (GAT) conference. Photo: PRIO Cyprus Centre, 2013.

The conference was jointly organized with PRIO's Cyprus Centre (PCC) and funded by the Norwegian MFA, EEA grants, and the UNDP in Cyprus. The conference attracted the participation of academics and activists from Croatia, Greece, Iraq, Israel, Turkey, and the UK, as well as, of course, Cyprus. UN special representative in Cyprus Lisa Buitenhuis together with Norway's Elisabeth Walaas opened the conference. Speakers gave the 150-strong audience insight into the possibilities and limitations of UNSCR 1325 as experienced by women working on the ground in conflict locations, spreading from Spain to Iraq. Further reflections and coordination for action were the main focus of a closed workshop between local and international activists which took place the following day.

A concrete example of implementing UNSCR 1325 was provided by GAT as it launched its first [report](#) and [policy brief](#) during the conference. The report contains recommendations on incorporating gender equality in the constitution and policies that will arise out of the negotia-

tions between the Greek- and Turkish-Cypriot leaders to end the Cyprus conflict. Although the negotiations have been ongoing for the last four decades, at no point has gender equality been on the agenda. GAT's report, published by PRIO Cyprus Centre, covers recommendations on negotiation chapters such as governance and power-sharing, citizenship, property, and the economy. GAT's recommendations and work have also been cited in the final reports of two large UNDP projects, 'Cyprus 2015' and 'Engage', as well as a shadow report recently submitted to the CEDAW Committee on the occasion of the examination of the Republic of Cyprus' report.

Further information on the conference and GAT's work can be found at [www.gat1325.org](http://www.gat1325.org). ■

## PRIO Seminar on Bertha von Suttner

On 7 February, the PRIO Gender Research Group organized an internal lunch seminar with Anne Synnøve Simensen, author of *Kvinnen bak fredsprisen* [The Woman Behind the Peace Prize].



Anne Synnøve Simensen, author of *Kvinnen bak fredsprisen* [The Woman Behind the Peace Prize]. Photo: Julie Lillesæter, PRIO, 2013.

The book tells the story of Bertha von Suttner, who is known to many as one of the founding mothers of the international peace movement and the author of the anti-war novel *Die Waffen nieder!* (Lay Down Your Arms!), published in 1889. What is not that well-known is the close friendship and extensive correspondence she had with Alfred Nobel. According to Simensen, von Suttner was the one who inspired Alfred Nobel to establish the prize that today is known as the world's most prestigious peace prize, the Nobel Peace Prize. Von Suttner was the first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 1905.

The Norwegian author Anne Synnøve Simensen discovered her story while working at the Nobel Peace Center in Oslo. She wrote this book to give Bertha von Suttner the credit she deserves. Simensen will talk about her book at the 25th annual Nobel Peace Prize Forum, which takes place 8-10 March in Minneapolis. For more about this event, visit <http://nobelpeaceprizeforum.org>

To learn more about the book and Bertha von Suttner's story, [watch this video](#) where Anne Synnøve Simensen talks about her new book. ■

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# International News

**The United Kingdom (UK)** has assumed the one-year presidency for the Group of 8 (G8) 2013, making efforts to combat sexual violence in conflict a priority. See [speech by Foreign Secretary William Hague](#):

**Women in International Security (WIIS)**, previously affiliated with the Center for Strategic and International Studies, has moved to the Washington DC office of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) North America as of 18 January.

**The United States Department of Defense (Pentagon)** announced it is lifting its ban on female soldiers' participation in combat. Read a [response by Cynthia Enloe](#) here.

**The Missing Peace Symposium 2013** took place on 14-16 February at the United States Institute of Peace (USIP) in Washington DC (see separate story).

**The Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security (GIWPS)** was launched on 20 February by Melanne Verwee, former Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues, and recently appointed Executive Director for the new Institute. See also [institute website](#). ■

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# News from Norway

**The Red Button-Campaign** "Stop Violence Against Women" was launched on 24 January. For more information see [website](#).

**A Conference on "Gender in NATO: Experiences from Afghanistan"** was organized by the Norwegian Defence University College (FHS) on 25 January.

**Kontaktkonferansen 2013** took place on 29 January. This annual event hosted by Forum for Women and Development (FOKUS) is where civil society and Norwegian government authorities come together to discuss and prepare for the upcoming Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

**Women's Right to Vote Anniversary 2013.** This year marks the 100th anniversary of women's right to vote in Norway. This will be celebrated by a range of events throughout the year; please visit the [official website](#) for an overview. PRIO will contribute by co-organizing a conference in November (to be announced). ■

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# News from PRIO

**Ann-Marie Goetz** from UN Women visited PRIO on 22 January to meet with the Gender Research Group.

**Anne Synnøve Simensen**, author of *Kvinnen bak fredsprisen* [The Woman Behind the Peace Prize] attended an internal lunch seminar organized by the PRIO Gender Research Group on 7 February (see separate story).

**Gina Torry**, Gender and Security Expert, UN Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA), gave a brown bag seminar on Ceasefire Agreements and the Protection of Civilians organized by the PRIO Gender Research Group on 1 March.

## Ragnhild Nordås

- Attended the Missing Peace symposium 2013, where she gave a presentation on a panel on Methodological Challenges and Opportunities.
- Attended the international conference The Gender Dimensions of Armed Violence at the Graduate Institute Geneva, Switzerland, 25 February 2013. She presented the paper "Why Do Militias Attack Civilians? Sexual Violence by African Militias

in Recent Armed Conflicts" which is co-authored with Dara Kay Cohen (Harvard University) on a panel titled The Gender Dimensions of Violence against Civilians.

- Attended a workshop on The Gender Dimensions of Social Conflict, Armed Violence And Peacebuilding organized by Elisabeth Prügl, IHEID; and Jana Krause, IHEID at the Graduate Institute Geneva, on 26 February.
- Together with Dara Kay Cohen, Ragnhild has launched a website which presents the Sexual Violence and Armed Conflict (SVAC) data project: [www.sexualviolencedata.org](http://www.sexualviolencedata.org). This website currently provides information about the project and the data collection and the researchers involved. Upon publication of the database (date TBD), the data will be downloadable from this site.

## Inger Skjelsbæk

- Participated in the Missing Peace Symposium 2013 (see separate story).
- Has taken up a position as Adjunct Associate Professor at the Department of Psychology at the University of Oslo. She will give lectures and supervise students on themes linked to social identity, qualitative methodology, social constructionist theory, gender, transitional justice, peace and conflict. This is in addition to her full-time position at PRIO as deputy director and senior researcher.

## Torunn L. Tryggstad

- Gave a presentation at a lunch seminar on the role of religious organizations/churches in relation to women's peace and security activism. The seminar was organized by the Norwegian Ecumenical Peace Platform, on 17 December 2012.
- Gave a presentation and participated in a panel discussion at a conference on "Gender in NATO: Experiences from Afghanistan" organized by the Norwegian Defence University Col-

lege (FHS) on 25 January.

- Chaired a brown bag seminar with Anne Synnøve Simensen, author of *Kvinnen bak fredsprisen* [The Woman Behind the Peace Prize], on 7 February.
- Chaired a brown bag seminar with Gina Torry, Gender and Security Advisor, UN Department of Political Affairs on 1 March.

#### Gudrun Østby

- Held a brown bag at PRIO on 16 January titled “Sexual Violence and Conflict: Exploring New Data”, about using survey data from demographic and health surveys to investigate the link between conflict and the general level of sexual violence in society (including domestic violence). ■

## Recent PRIO Publications

**Gender Advisory Team (GAT) (2012).** *Women's Peace. Recommendations of the Gender Advisory Team on the peace negotiations in Cyprus.* PCC Policy Brief 01. PRIO Cyprus Centre, Nicosia.

**Gender Advisory Team (GAT) (2012).** *Women's Peace in Cyprus: Recommendations of the Gender Advisory Team (GAT) on Implementing UNSCR 1325 Provisions on Women, Peace and Security.* PCC Report 03. PRIO Cyprus Centre, Nicosia.

**Nordås, Ragnhild and Dara Kay Cohen (2012)** *Sexual Violence by Militias in African Conflicts. Not a question of “delegation” by states.* CSCW Policy Brief 01/2012. PRIO, Oslo.

**Nordås, Ragnhild and Dara Kay Cohen (2012)** *Sexual Violence in African Conflicts, 1989-2009. What the data show.* CSCW Policy Brief 02/2012. PRIO, Oslo.

**Nordås, Ragnhild (2012)** *Sexual Violence on the Decline?* CSCW Policy Brief 03/2012. PRIO, Oslo.

**Nordås, Ragnhild (2013)** *Preventing Conflict-related Sexual Violence.* PRIO Policy Brief 02/2013. PRIO, Oslo.

**Skjelsbæk, Inger (2013)** *Preventing Perpetrators: How to go from protection to prevention of sexual violence in war?* PRIO Policy Brief 03/2013. PRIO, Oslo. ■

## Other Recent Publications

**Bastick, Megan and Tobie Whitman (2013).** *The Women's Guide to Security Sector Reform.* The Institute for Inclusive Security and The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva.

**Cohen, Dara Kay, Amelia Hoover Green, and Elisabeth Jean Wood (2012).** *War-time Sexual Violence: Misconceptions, Implications, and Ways Forward.* United States Institute of Peace (USIP), Washington, DC.

**Human Rights Watch (2013).** “We Will Teach You a Lesson” *Sexual Violence against Tamils by Sri Lankan Security Forces.* Human Rights Watch, February 2013.

**Kapell, Alana (2013).** *Peace and Security, Women and Girls. Child Friendly Version of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325.* Save the Children Norway,

Oslo.

**Simensen, Anne Synnøve (2011).** *Kvinnen bak fredsprisen. Historien om Bertha von Suttner og Alfred Nobel* [The Woman Behind the Peace Prize. The story of Bertha von Suttner and Alfred Nobel]. Cappelen Damm, Oslo.

**Solhjell, Randi, Marcela Donaldio, Ancil Adrian-Paul, Niels Nagelhus Schia, Juan Rial and Renata Giannini (2012).** *Turning UNSC Resolution 1325 into operational practice: A cross-country study on implementing Resolution 1325 in peace-keeping and military operations.* Security in Practice 11, 2012 (NUPI Report). NUPI, Oslo.

**United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2013).** *The Role of Data in Addressing Violence against Women and Girls.* United Nations, New York.

**Wilton Park Conference Report (2012).** *Preventing sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations.* WP 1199, Wilton Park. ■

## Coming Events

**The Fifty-seventh Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)** will take place on 4-15 March 2013. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cs w/>

**Women in Peacbuilding.** Conference to be held at Wilton Park 18-20 March 2013. For more information, visit [conference website](#). ■



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