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News Release

New USIP Book Addresses Power and Protection of Women in War

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(Washington)—The United States Institute of Peace announces the publication of *Women and War: Power and Protection in the 21st Century* edited by Kathleen Kuehnast, Chantal de Jonge Oudraat, and Helga Hernes. The book addresses the reality that women have long been uncounted victims of war and examines the increased role of women as armed combatants in conflicts, while asking the question of how to bring women into the setting the agenda for peacebuilding in conflict affected countries. The volume takes stock of the current state of knowledge on women, peace and security issues and offers steps to ensure that women are protected, counted, and engaged, during and after conflict.

Ten years ago, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325), which calls for women's full participation in promoting peace and security and for greater efforts to protect women in war, particularly from sexual violence. However, today gender-based analysis of conflict often remains outside the mainstream of security dialogues. This volume underscores that much remains to be done to develop effective conflict prevention and management strategies that are inclusive of women and that give women a voice at the negotiating table.

“Despite the increased awareness at the policy level of why gender analysis in international peace and security is critical, the actual implementation of gender-sensitive policies in our defense, diplomacy, and development work is still in an early phase. The importance of UNSCR 1325 cannot be underestimated, as it has put forward a framework that addresses the need for the protection of women in war, but simultaneously the resolution recognizes that women are critical and powerful actors in negotiating peace and conflict management,” states Kuehnast, director of the Gender and Peacebuilding Center at the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP). “This volume highlights innovative approaches to date to ensure the greater participation of women at the negotiating table, and the ways in which women will make a difference in the security arena over the next decade.”

The editors highlight the resolution's potential to advance the rights of women around the world. They take a forward-looking approach, emphasizing that setting a well-grounded research agenda is the first step toward realizing the resolution's dual goals of power and protection.

“The lack of accurate data about how gender affects issues of power and inequality helps sustain many of the myths surrounding the roles of men and women and reinforces stereotypes,” states de Jonge Oudraat, head of the Jennings Randolph Fellowship Program at USIP. “Credible data could both demonstrate to policymakers that the problems of women in war are real and pressing,

as well as pointing them toward solutions. Likewise, sex-disaggregated conflict data on casualties and causes of death could assist policymakers toward effective interventions to protect women from violence during and after conflict.”

Several of the book’s chapters focus on preventing sexual violence during war. Co-editor Helga Hernes, Senior Advisor of the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) stresses that “Sexual violence is both a consequence and a symptom of powerlessness and poverty. Even though the United Nations and some governments now are addressing the issue, the root causes still are not being dealt with, and therefore, victims, many of whom are women and children, do not have real protection.”

Women and War outlines an action plan for revitalizing UNSCR 1325, an ambitious and achievable agenda for action on women and armed conflict.

ABOUT THE EDITORS

Kathleen Kuehnast is director of the Gender and Peacebuilding Center of Innovation at the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP). Kuehnast joined USIP following a 15 year career in international development. She has worked extensively with the World Bank and other bi-lateral institutions, including managing international research projects and advising policymakers (government and nongovernment) on social development concerns, with a focus on gender-related issues. As a recipient of the Mellon Foreign Fellowship at the Library of Congress in 2000 and the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies Fellowship at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in 1999, she has studied and written extensively on the impact of post-Soviet transition on Muslim women of Central Asia.

Chantal de Jonge Oudraat directs the USIP's Jennings Randolph Fellowship Program. Before joining the U.S. Institute of Peace, de Jonge Oudraat was an adjunct associate professor at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service, Georgetown University, and a senior fellow at the Center for Transatlantic Relations, Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University, where she focused on transatlantic relations and global security issues. She has also served as codirector of the Managing Global Issues project at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington, DC, (1998-2002); as research affiliate at the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University (1994-98); and a member of the senior staff at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR) in Geneva (1981-94).

Helga Hernes is a senior adviser on women, peace, and security issues at the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) and serves as chair of the Norwegian Parliamentary Intelligence Oversight Committee. She has previously been director of a number of research programs and projects at various research institutes in Norway. Hernes has also had a political and diplomatic career. For two different periods (1988-89 and 1990-93), she served as State Secretary at the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. From 1996 to 1998, she was special adviser for UN peacekeeping operations. From 1998 to 2003 she was Norwegian ambassador to Austria and Slovakia, and from 2002 to 2004 Norwegian ambassador to Switzerland and the Vatican.

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ABOUT THE UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) provides the analysis, training and tools that help to prevent, manage and end violent international conflicts, promote stability and professionalize the field of peacebuilding.

In March 2011, the Institute moved into its permanent headquarters at the northwest corner of the National Mall in Washington, D.C. The headquarters will serve as a national hub for research, training and on-the-ground work in preventing and managing international conflict and allow USIP to address the difficult problems of war and peace using cost-effective and efficient problem-solving approaches. It houses the working offices of USIP, a state of the art conference center, a professional education and training Academy, and a public education center.

To learn more about the Institute and its work, please go to: <http://www.usip.org>.

Women and War

Questions and Answers

What do the authors examine in *Women and War*?

We examine the specific and unique challenges of war, for women, and the actions taken by the UN Security Council to protect and also empower women in conflict—namely, the adoption of Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325).

What is UNSCR 1325?

UNSCR 1325 is a landmark international legal framework that addresses not only the inordinate impact of war on women, but also the pivotal role women should and do play in conflict management, conflict resolution and sustainable peace.

The Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995 brought the impact of war on women's lives and the issue of women's agency in international and national security issues to the attention of world leaders. Five years later, UNSCR 1325 was adopted. At the heart of the resolution are two main ideas: power and protection.

1. Women must have the power to participate equally in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security. The resolution recognized that women were largely absent from decision-making processes related to conflict prevention and resolution and that their role must be increased.
2. World leaders and institutions acknowledge that women are inordinately affected by physical and sexual violence, especially in intrastate conflicts, and that they bear the burden of social and economic reconstruction. Hence, special efforts need to be made to protect women from physical violence, sexual violence in particular, and to further provide designated and sustain support to women in rebuilding their society.

How has the international relations field recently evolved to address gender issues?

For most of the twentieth century, the study and practice of war and international relations have been dominated by men with a focus on the security of states. The end of the Cold War and the changing nature of violent conflict have altered the way policymakers and experts think about war and its impacts. At the conceptual level, we have witnessed a shift from seeing security solely through a military lens to understanding the broader notion of human security with its focus on the individual and relations between individuals and groups within societies. This changed perspective has led to greater awareness of the importance of gender analysis in international relations. At the operational level, we have witnessed a call for a more active role for the United Nations, especially gender-specific challenges faced by women in conflict situations.

How effective has UNSCR 1325 been since it was adopted in 2000?

Since the adoption of UNSCR 1325 a decade ago, a high level of activity has taken place in many countries, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and academic institutions. This activity includes the elaboration of national action plans, guidelines, strategies, and policies to ensure that women have equal and fair representation at operational and decision-making levels, and that they be provided with specific measures to guarantee their protection from violence of any kind. UNSCR 1325 has created a security framework which is inclusive of gender issues. That said, conventional thinking about the roles that men and women play in the international peace and security realm remains persistent, and therefore, much remains to be done at both the conceptual and operational levels to shift the perception of war and peace to be inclusive of women.

What are the consequences of marginalizing gender issues in the conflict resolution process?

The marginalization of gender as a “soft” issue in conflict resolution and reconstruction processes can perpetuate existing social inequalities, including the under utilization of half the population for engaged peacebuilding. Disregarding basic human rights of women, such as protection from sexual abuse and their full access to education and the labor force, results in continued relegation of women to subordinate positions in the private sphere and marginalization in the public sphere.

For many academics and policymakers, security continues to be defined primarily in military terms and connected to the notion of the state. As long as these dominant frameworks stay in place, scant progress can be made in understanding what goes on in today’s predominant form of violent conflict—namely internal conflict.

Why is the collection of conflict data so important to the goals of UNSCR 1325?

Wars and postconflict reconstruction processes have very different impacts on the sexes, and therefore must be monitored separately. However, in many countries data collection is gender blind. This affects the way we look at the world, define problems and generate solutions. In short, it leads to ineffective policies. For example, the lack of accurate sex-aggregated data of number of combatants will often leave women without access to reintegration programs—thus, it is often assumed that all combatants are male. Similarly, the lack of sex-disaggregated data on the number of deaths in a conflict may skew our understanding of the conflict and the impact on society.

How has the United Nations addressed the problem of sexual abuse during peacekeeping operations?

The United Nations has been slow in addressing the issue of sexual violence by peacekeepers. For the most part efforts have consisted of “gender training.” That is, efforts to increase gender sensitivity and consciousness on the part of male peacekeeping and security personnel. It is only recently that some attention has been paid to initiatives that would integrate and recruit women into peacekeeping operations and security forces.

What steps can be taken, and by whom, to effectively reach the objectives of UNSCR 1325?

As Donald Steinberg discusses in the final chapter, “An Agenda for Action,” we can no longer afford to exclude the talents and skills of half the population in the pursuit of peace or to treat them as mere victims. He lays out specific priority actions to revitalize UNSCR 1325.

1. Those charged with leading and supporting peace processes, especially mediators from the United Nations and regional bodies, should commit to bringing women into peace negotiations and peace agreement processes.
2. The countries most instrumental in creating the new UN entity, UN Women, must ensure that it has the power, resources, and global reach to make a real difference.
3. Bilateral donors and multilateral institutions should expand assistance for private women’s groups in conflict-affected countries.
4. The UN Security Council must demand that the United Nations adopt time-bound goals—backed by monitoring, accountability provisions, and enforcement mechanisms—for reducing violence against women, ensuring the participation of women in peace processes, and providing reconstruction resources to projects of interest to women, and the like.

5. The international humanitarian community should join together to protect one of the most vulnerable groups in conflict: those displaced from their homes and seeking refuge in camps for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs). A priority should be prevention of sexual violence of women; an expansion of livelihood, health, and education programs; the mainstreaming of psychosocial considerations in all protection and services; training for camp managers and protection forces; proper configuration of camps; and engagement of women refugees and IDPs in decision making on these issues.
6. Leading external supporters of security sector reform in postconflict situations—the European Union, the United States, and the United Nations in particular—should ensure that their support to rebuild and reform armies, police, and other security forces include effective training in gender analysis for all personnel and require a substantial incorporation of women into those forces.
7. There must be new financial resources dedicated to these efforts provided through both formal and voluntary contributions.

Praise for *Women and War*

“*Women and War* offers a state-of-the-art look at how war affects women and women affect war—and peace. The collection surveys the burgeoning literature on gender and armed conflict, adding original research showing the yawning gap between international commitments (like UN Resolution 1325) and the brutal realities facing women amid war. It does so with a nuanced view of the differential impacts of war on women’s bodies, social circumstances, and economic chances. Fully recognizing the agency of women and their contributions to peacemaking, peacekeeping, and postwar economic development, this book doesn’t shy away from identifying flawed international approaches and persistent obstacles that block women’s potential roles in peace and economic recovery. Kuehnast, Oudraat, and Hernes have given practitioners, scholars, and students an indispensable new resource.”

—**Charles T. Call**, American University

“News headlines indicate that the victimization of women in war is often a deliberate policy of the belligerents and even a by-product of the well-intentioned stabilization efforts of outsiders. Yet this phenomenon remains understudied by the academic community and not well understood by policymakers who seek to limit the consequences of conflicts. This policy-oriented book aims to help fill the academic gap with informative chapters that move beyond the anecdotal to provide foundational data on the victimization of women. It traces the efforts—slow and halting at the operational levels—of the member states of the United Nations to put forward the rights of women. It offers a well-thought-out agenda for action premised on the proposition that being gender-neutral discriminates against women. This volume should be read not only by those concerned with the victimization of women in war and peace processes but also by those who do not yet fully appreciate the depth of the problem.”

—**Don Daniel**, Georgetown University

“I have met too many survivors of sexual violence in the Congo, Darfur, Bosnia, Kosovo, Uganda, Colombia, and elsewhere. For too long we have tolerated that a conspiracy of silence surrounds mass rape of women in war. This colossal injustice is as old as war itself, but it is only now starting to be addressed. *Women and War* from USIP and PRIO should get more of us who can live without fear and shame to wake up, be outraged, and act for change.”

—**Jan Egeland**, director of the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs and former UN Undersecretary General for Humanitarian Affairs

“*Women and War* should be on the desk of every mediator, peacekeeper, and policymaker working in the international peace and conflict arena. The book uses empirical evidence to cut its way through stereotypes of women as victims of war, taking us on a vivid journey of women’s actual experiences, ranging from the rape camps of Kosovo to the surprising effects of a gender-neutral peace in Angola. The authors shed light on the triumphs and failures of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and provide a road map for the full participation of women at all stages of peacebuilding. The book is sure to make readers question deep-seated assumptions about the roles of women, and will change how we all think about war, peace, and justice.”

—**Melanie Greenberg**, president, Cypress Fund for Peace and Security and Co-President, Women in International Security

“*Women and War* provides a long-neglected analysis of the role of women in conflict not only in their absence from the decision-making process but also in the impact of conflict on women and the broader society. In the case of the latter, the book makes a compelling case that unlike past tendencies to regard women as passive, women often assume leadership roles within their families as well as their communities to the point of active combatants. For scholars, this book breaks ground with respect to the critical role of women and is an essential book for students as well.”

—**Gale Mattox**, Georgetown University and U.S. Naval Academy

“*Women and War* illuminates the toll that war takes on women and the role that women’s empowerment can play in reducing the horrors of war. This well-designed volume combines incisive analysis and rich factual detail with practical take-home lessons.”

—**Jack Snyder**, Belfer Professor of International Relations, Columbia University

“*Women and War* makes a truly noteworthy contribution to our understanding of gender’s sculpting impact on conflict. In clear and passionate prose, the authors spotlight the various impacts and yawning gaps in how Resolution 1325 is being interpreted and applied a decade after its adoption. Superb considerations of sexual violence and the economic challenges confronting women in postwar worlds set Resolution 1325 into essential context. Anyone aiming to grasp the commanding imprint of gender on war and peacebuilding will find *Women and War* essential reading.”

—**Marc Sommers**, The Fletcher School, Tufts University

“Peace agreements typically fall apart when they fail to resolve the issues that caused the conflict in the first place—including ethnic tensions, inequality, and injustice. Women face these problems everyday so they should be the ones who bring these issues to the negotiating table and find practical solutions. I believe that this book, which explores important themes such as women’s security, peacebuilding by women, and violence against women, is highly relevant as we mark the tenth anniversary of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security.”

—**Jonas Gahr Støre**, Norwegian foreign minister