



Women's security In Afghanistan

Recommendations to NATO

Brussels – June 2014



These policy recommendations have been developed by ENNA (European Network of NGOs in Afghanistan) and BAAG (British & Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group), in dialogue with all members of both networks.

Contact : Anna Nijsters, Coordinator ENNA
nijsters@ennanet.eu

This document can be downloaded from: www.ennanet.eu

Women's security in Afghanistan

Ensuring successful implementation of UNSCR 1325

Brussels – June 2014

As we move from security transition towards transformation, progress in women's rights in Afghanistan represents a key indicator of change that lays the foundations of an inclusive, democratic, and peaceful society. Advances in women's and girls' rights and participation – in education, employment, public life, and other spheres – are primarily an achievement of Afghans themselves. Yet, NATO and the international community at large continue to have a critical role to play – as well as important responsibilities – to ensure that these hard-won and still fragile gains are consolidated and expanded.

NATO has collectively made significant efforts to improve the professionalism and responsiveness of the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). This included training on human rights and women's rights, and support for the recruitment of female staff. More specifically, NATO training efforts have included the training of women in the Afghan army and the police force. Such efforts should be intensified and expanded, however, to entrench these gains and address various threats to their sustainability.

With the support of Mari Skåre, NATO Secretary General's Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, NATO has made global commitments to implement UNSCR 1325. Various NATO member states have outlined bilateral action plans on UNSCR 1325. The real test for NATO's commitment, however, is how all these initiatives will be coordinated and put into practice. As such, the summit in September is a key moment to make substantive, concrete and realistic commitments on how NATO and its member states implement UNSCR 1325 in its operations in Afghanistan.

The following recommendations aim to ensure that preparations for the NATO summit are effectively informed by the analysis and experience of both international and Afghan civil society organisations (CSOs), and outline actions and outcomes that NATO should prioritise so that their strategies to promote the rights of Afghan women and girls and participation of Afghan women are successful and sustainable.

Recommendations to NATO :

1. **Now is the time:** NATO should grasp this crucial political window of opportunity following Afghan elections to take its commitment to 1325 to the next level by substantiating this commitment and translation it into clear actions and activities for the post-ISAF era.
2. **Inclusive consultation process:** Consultation meetings with Afghan and international CSOs should be convened in Brussels and Kabul, in order to inform the summit agenda and decision-making. Given the political risks involved for CSOs interacting with military actors involved in the conflict in Afghanistan, these consultations should, where needed , be conducted confidentially.
3. **Side event on Women, Peace and Security :** Side events to the NATO summit in September 2014 could be developed in consultation with Afghan Women's Network (AWN), which has undertaken surveys monitoring impacts of transition on women's security, surveys of APRP implementation from a gender perspective, and support to Women Police Associations in central Afghanistan.
4. **Mainstreaming of UNSCR 1325:** At the NATO summit itself, deliberations and commitments on Afghanistan should integrate UNSCR 1325 implementation in line with the recommendations outlined below.
5. **Follow up action:** In terms of the follow-up process, efforts should be made to ensure meaningful participation of Afghan women both from state institutions and civil society. This requires increased female participation at all levels, as well as senior male staff within NATO, ISAF and its member states demonstrating their understanding and support for the strategic value of UNSCR 1325.
6. **Permanent Special Representative for WPS:** In addition, the position of Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security should become a permanent position in the NATO staff and not dependent on the funding of one member state.

Recommendations to NATO & ISAF allies :

1. **Continuation of women recruitment:** Progress and challenges in relation to the ANSF goal of 10% female recruitment by 2024 and 5,000 female police in the ANP should be reviewed and effective counter measures that address barriers to female recruitment and retention should be implemented. Specific support (including funding) should be provided for increased female recruitment and retention in all branches of the ANSF (especially in the police), increased resourcing of Family Response Units, improved working conditions and career development for female personnel, and more effective female roles and leadership. The Afghan Ministry of Interior's initiative to establish an internal commission with a 6-month strategy and implementation plan on recruitment and retention of women in the ANP deserves support. ISAF Engineers could also be tasked to undertake an assessment of ANP facilities to map key needs in terms of female-only spaces, as no such assessment currently exists.

- 2. Investments in heightened awareness:** Achieve more effective awareness of and invest in training on human rights and women's and girl's rights for all ANSF personnel at all levels – including increased training for the Afghan Local Police – is essential. NATO and its allies can help achieve this partly through specific donor funding for promoting women's rights and participation in the ANSF, increased support through multilateral actors such as EUPOL, maintaining effective gender advisors in the Resolute Support mission, and through training and female participation at the Afghan National Army Officers Academy.
- 3. Linking 1325 training to broader objective:** ANSF training and mentoring on gender, human and women's and girls' rights and civilian protection should be framed in ways that relate to the security objectives of the police or military audience. NATO should invest in learning how to most effectively link aspects of training programmes related to gender, rights or protection issues and the wider curriculum and mentoring efforts.
- 4. Measuring progress on 1325:** Performance management metrics in the ANSF, as well as for international trainers, advisors and mentors, should include indicators related to delivering on specific outcomes in terms of human rights, women's rights and civilian protection. Regular monthly and annual performance reviews, as well as promotions, should factor in the extent to which basic benchmarks are met and progress is made. In this regard, it is welcome that the ISAF Gender Advisory Unit has been tasked to develop an 8-month plan for how ISAF will make progress toward stated gender-related objectives. This should be signed-off at the highest COMISAF level and reported on to NATO HQ at regular intervals.
- 5. Improving accountability:** Vetting, oversight and accountability mechanisms for all the ANSF, applied to the ALP and other irregular forces, should be further improved. This requires intensified support for the Afghan government in creating well publicized, transparent, and independent mechanisms for investigating complaints and providing reparations that are easily accessible for both women and men. These should include civilian casualties mitigation units within all ANSF structures that proactively monitor and investigate civilian deaths and injuries caused by the ANSF, and ALP, as well as a more effective Police Ombudsman office.
- 6. The Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme:** Progress on implementing the Afghan Peace and Reintegration Programme (APRP) Gender Policy should be reviewed with specific measures to ensure meaningful involvement of Afghan civil society and women's groups in decision-making and implementation of APRP initiatives at the community level. Afghan Women's Network is currently undertaking a survey of APRP implementation from a gender perspective at local level that could contribute to this review.
- 7. Alignment with TMAF:** The NATO summit should affirm the alignment of ISAF's efforts with commitments made in the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework (TMAF) on good governance and gender, as well as the Afghan National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security. The Afghan government should be held accountable on these commitments, and NATO support aligned with them.



British & Irish Agencies Afghanistan Group is an advocacy and networking agency which aims to support humanitarian and development programmes in Afghanistan

Romero House - 55 Westminster Bridge Road
London SE1 7JB , United Kingdom
+44 (0) 20 7633 4979

www.baag.org.uk



European Network of NGOs in Afghanistan (ENNA) is a network of individual NGOs and networks based in Europe who are actively involved in non-profit humanitarian and/or development assistance to Afghanistan.

Rue Montoyer 24, 1000 Bruxelles
+32 (0) 2 287 08 10

www.ennanet.eu