

ROUNDTABLE REPORT

# UNSCR 1820: A Roundtable Discussion with Female UN Police Officers Deployed in Peacekeeping Operations

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CENTRE POUR LE  
MAINTIEN DE LA PAIX  
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# Table of Contents

## Part I: Introduction

Background.....	1
Aim and Objectives.....	2
Methodology.....	2

## Part II: Roundtable Overview

Presentation 1: Guilavogui Gnalen, Republic of Guinea, Gender Officer, UN Police in MINUSTAH (Haiti).....	3
Presentation 2: Ann Ménard, Canada, Former UN Police in MINUSTAH (Haiti).....	4
Presentation 3: Anne Tusiime, Uganda, Gender, Child and Vulnerable Persons Protection Officer, UNMIS (Sudan).....	4
Presentation 4: Olabisi Kolawali, Nigeria, Investigations Officer, Standing Police Capacity (SPC), UN Police Division, OROLSI, DPKO (New York).....	5
Presentation 5: Doreen Malambo, Investigation Advisory Head of Women and Children Protection Service (WACPS), UNMIL (Liberia).....	6

## Part III: Next Steps

Key Observations .....	9
Conclusion.....	9

## Part IV: Annex

Roundtable Programme .....	11
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### How to Read this Report

The main purpose of this report is to provide a record for attendees, as well as other individuals, groups, and organisations working toward similar goals. This report also provides a consolidated account of the main points elaborated on during the presentations and questions raised, for those who will take the process forward. The report is divided into four parts:

**Part I** serves as Introduction;

**Part II** of the report presents an overview of the Roundtable format and of the topics discussed;

**Part III** of the report highlights a number of key observations from the Roundtable and gives a brief conclusion; and

**Part IV** of the report includes the roundtable report as an Annex.

“Police services are most effective when both sexes are represented [and] the equal participation of female police officers at all levels of the United Nations Police provides enhanced operational efficiency.”

*- Anne-Marie Orlor, Deputy-Police Adviser, UN Police Division, OROLSI, DPKO*

"The experiences and advice of women UNPOL Officers are invaluable as we advance our collective understanding of how interventions against sexual violence can be more effective. Their presence also highlights the critical importance of increasing the number of women officers in the field which can empower women to come forward to report sexual violence while at the same time presenting women in positions of authority and power; a key element to breaking the cycle of sexual violence."

*- Ambassador Henri Paul Normandin, Canadian Permanent Mission to the United Nations*

# **Part I: Introduction**

On August 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre (PPC), in conjunction with the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations and the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN DPKO) organized a half-day open roundtable entitled *UNSCR 1820: A Roundtable Discussion with Female UN Police Officers Deployed in Peacekeeping Operations*. The roundtable brought together representatives from a variety of Permanent Missions to the United Nations, UN DPKO, NGOs, academics and other interested members of civil society. The roundtable was held at the United Nations Secretariat Building in Conference Room 5.

## **Background**

The landmark United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 (UN SCR 1820), which demands an immediate and complete halt to sexual violence against civilians in conflict zones, celebrated its first anniversary in June 2009. The resolution is key in asserting that systematic sexual violence exacerbates conflicts and has a serious negative impact on international peace and security, that preventing and responding to sexual violence is essential to maintaining peace, and that it aims to end the impunity of countries who fail to condemn those guilty of committing sexual violence. Moreover, it reasserts the zero tolerance principle in peace operations towards sexual violence, ‘the exclusion of sexual violence crimes from amnesty provisions,’ the deployment of a higher percentage of women peacekeepers or police, and the recognition that women play an important role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, and in peacebuilding. Finally, paragraph 15 of the resolution explicitly requests the Secretary General to submit to the Security Council a report on the implementation of the resolution.

Following the submission of this report on July 15, 2009, the Security Council held an open-debate on August 7 under the presidency of the United Kingdom. This was a crucial step in advancing the prevention of sexual violence in conflict zones, as envisaged by resolution 1820.

The Pearson Peacekeeping Center (PPC), in collaboration with the UN DPKO and the Canadian Permanent Mission in New York, brought three women who are currently serving as female UN Police (UNPOL) officers from Africa and the Americas to the open-debate on UN SCR 1820. This initiative took place thanks to the generous financial contribution of the Global Peace Operations Program (GPOP) of the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT).

## **Objectives**

The roundtable represented a unique opportunity for the PPC to continue the tremendous work that has been undertaken so far on the issue of sexual and gender-based violence.

The PPC believes that gender equality is a basic prerequisite of any sound, equitable and sustainable peace operation. As a result, it has mainstreamed gender issues into all its training and education curricula. In addition, in the last quarter of 2008 the PPC began working on the important issue of Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV). This is one of the main areas within peace operations that policing officials are increasingly called upon to assist with and advise on. The PPC has designed a two-week training course on SGBV to increase the effectiveness of International Police Officers participating in the African Union (AU) and United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID). In support of the UNAMID Mandate for the United Nations Police, this course has so far strengthened the capacity of UNPOL officers, especially

women police officers. The course will soon be available in French and adapted such that it can be used for other peacekeeping missions.

Moreover, Canada is an international leader on this issue and leads the Friends of Women, Peace and Security group in New York. Together with the UN DPKO, UNIFEM and the UK, Canada co-sponsored a landmark Wilton Park conference in May 2008 on the role of military peacekeepers in combating sexual violence. The document detailing the outcomes of this conference was issued as an *official document of the Security Council* during the adoption of SCR 1820. Furthermore, on May 29, 2009, the International Day of Peacekeepers, the UN DPKO launched an international campaign entitled “Women Peacekeepers: The Power to Empower.”

In that light, the PPC in partnership with the UN DPKO, brought three female UNPOL officers who are currently serving in peacekeeping operations to New York to take part in the Roundtable and in the Security Council Open-Debate on UN SCR 1820.

The main objectives of this initiative were as followed:

### Roundtable Objectives

- Allow current and past female UNPOL officers’ voices to be heard by Member States;
- Increase awareness of Member States, civil society and other actors on the challenges, realizations and opportunities arising from UN SCR 1820;
- Increase awareness of the role of UNPOL officers as part of a broader UN response to complex peace operations;
- Stress to the Member States the value of sending female UNPOL officers to missions and the need for all UNPOL missions and officers to address SGBV;
- Increase support for the UN DPKO international campaign to increase the number of female police officers from 8 to 20 % by 2014;
- Foster dialogue and cooperation with civil society groups, Member States and other relevant actors involved in peace operations; and
- Heighten Canada’s support of the women, peace and security agenda within the UN and specifically on UN SCR 1820.

### Methodology

The roundtable followed a series of presentations from past and present UNPOL officers. There was a period reserved for questions and answers from the audience following the presentations.

The roundtable brought together more than 160 representatives from different Member States through their Permanent mission to the United Nations, the UN DPKO, NGOs, academics and other representatives from civil society.

## Part II: Roundtable Overview

The roundtable started with introductory remarks by Ambassador Henri-Paul Normandin, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations. Ambassador Normandin started by highlighting the important role that female police officers play in peacekeeping operations in addition to the importance of looking at the best ways to prevent and respond to cases of SGBV.

Dave Beer, PPC's Director, Africa Programs, underlined the importance of the resolution in asserting that systematic sexual violence not only exacerbates conflicts but has a serious negative impact on international peace and security. Mr. Beer mentioned that this discussion was timely and of particular importance to the PPC given its involvement on the issue of sexual and gender-based violence.

The presentations by the three female UNPOL officers, summarized below, highlighted the successes and challenges of female police officers in mission as well as the importance of their presence in the field.

### **Presentation 1: Guilavogui Gnalén, Republic of Guinea, Gender Officer, UN Police in MINUSTAH (Haiti)**

Guilavogui Gnalén began her presentation by reminding the audience of the mandate of an UNPOL officer in Haiti. The mandate consists of supporting the Haiti National Police (HNP) in the stabilization process to ensure the professionalization of the national police service through the development and strengthening of the local capacity (including monitoring, mentoring and vetting). She also discussed the security context in Haiti, highlighting the increase in violence, especially gang rape.

Ms Gnalén went on to speak about her mandate as a Gender Advisor, which consists of raising awareness and putting in place projects regarding gender issues, in addition to reinforcing, following, evaluating and assessing the national police service in terms of gender issues.

As a Gender Adviser, Guilavogui Gnalén reported putting in place the following projects to achieve her mandate:

- A module on awareness-raising on best practices when working with victims of sexual violence;
- A didactic film on best practices when working with victims of physical and sexual violence;
- A community-policing project to raise awareness of the population about crimes and sexual offences as a means to encourage and exhort the local population to denounce these crimes.

In terms of the impact of the presence of female police officers in peace operations, Ms Gnalén mentioned the following qualities and particular abilities that women officers bring to missions:

- Ability to pay attention to their environment and to power relations;
- Ability to communicate effectively and with empathy;
- Openness; and
- Conciliatory nature or ability.

## **Presentation 2: Ann Ménard, Canada, Former UN UN Police in MINUSTAH (Haiti)**

Ms Ménard has deployed to Haiti twice since 2005. During her first mission, she was part of the anti-kidnapping team. During her second mission she was a technical adviser to the Minor's Protection Brigade and Crimes of Sexual Violence Unit (Brigade de protection des mineurs et des crimes sexuels - BPM). As part of her responsibilities, she worked closely with other UN police officers, other parts of the UN (including Child Protection, Human Rights) and UN agencies and NGOs such as UNICEF and Médecins du Monde. She also coordinated field operations involving these organisations and members of the Haitian National Police.

In Haiti, approximately 50% of victims of sexual violence are women under the age of 18. Given this reality, Mme Ménard explained that a decision was taken to combine the Minor's Protection Brigade with the Sexual Crimes Unit in order to better respond to the country's challenges. The primary role of the BPM is to support the work of Haitian police officers within the Brigade at the operational and administrative levels.

To ensure that victims of sexual violence received the support and treatment required, members of MINUSTAH were mandated to train qualified female Haitian police officers on issues specific to sexual and gender-based violence. Following their training, however, these women were given administrative tasks instead of investigating crimes of sexual violence and putting in practice the skills they had learned. They had no contact with the victims.

According to Mme Ménard, there are still many barriers to the participation of women in the police in Haiti, but that the presence of women in peace operations helps to broaden the minds and spirits of male colleagues. She acknowledged that 30 years ago, her colleagues had encountered the same challenges while working with the City of Montreal police service. Today, these challenges are absent, proving that change is possible. The presence of female UNPOL officers is also contributing to the acceptance of women in the security sector by serving as examples to male colleagues.

Mme Ménard concluded her presentation by stating that a greater space for women in peace operations is not only desirable, but makes sense as it can only enhance the quality of the services provided by the police to the population.

## **Presentation 3: Anne Tusiime, Uganda, Gender, Child and Vulnerable Persons Protection Officer, UNMIS (Sudan)**

Anne Tusiime started her presentation by highlighting the UNMIS mandate, which can be found in the UN Security Council Resolution 1590. Article 4 (a) (vii) reads as follows:

*...to assist the parties to the comprehensive peace agreement in coordination with bilateral and multilateral assistance programs, in restructuring the police service in Sudan, consistent with democratic policing, to develop a police training and evaluation program and to otherwise assist in the training of civilian police.*

She went on to speak about the rampant SGBV crimes that were committed during Sudan's 20-year civil war where the entire population, and especially women and children, suffered immensely.

Ms Tusiime highlighted the inspiring and fundamental roles female UNPOL officers can play in peace operations. According to her experience, female UNPOL officers:

- Have been role models for Sudanese women;
- Have been more interested in SGBV issues than their male counterparts;
- Have greater access to vulnerable communities; and
- Bring compassion, empathy, understanding and professionalism.

Ms Tusiime discussed the essential role of women, not only in peacekeeping, but also in peacemaking and peacebuilding. Women have an undeniable role to play in creating sustainable peace and security. Some of the reasons highlighted by Anne Tusiime to increase the number of female police officers, especially in the UNMIS context, are:

- Cultural issues (in the case of Sudan): women feel more comfortable dealing with female police officers;
- To help understand culture and ethnic issues more accurately and to play a key role in conflict resolution;
- Women bring specific skills and strengths to Police work, such as the ability to defuse potentially violent situations;
- The Women Network in UNMIS has created a forum for improved interaction with the host state's police.

Some of the challenges that Anne Tusiime brought to light when it comes to investigating SGBV issues are:

- Military orientation of the police;
- Language barriers;
- Lack of protection measures for victims of SGBV; and
- Few SGBV cases reported

**Presentation 4: Olabisi Kolawali, Nigeria, Investigations Officer, Standing Police Capacity (SPC), UN Police Division, OROLSI, DPKO (New York).**

Olabisi Kolawali was sent to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) to provide assistance to the UN mission in that country (MONUC) in May 2009. Her presentation was based on her experience helping to set up specialised police units on sexual and gender-based crimes for the DRC police.

Ms Kolawali's presentation focused on the subject of investigating sexual and gender-based violence in the DRC. She started her presentation by outlining the current situation in the country where cases of rapes and sexual abuses are widespread. This is especially true in the East and in areas where the violence is committed by "uniformed personnel" (members of armed groups, national armed forces and national police). As a result of rampant SGBV crimes, the Inspector General of the Congo National Police (PNC) decided to establish Special Police Units for the Protection of Women and Children (Police spéciale pour la protection de l'enfance et de la femme - PSPEF). At the time of this presentation, these had only been created in four districts in the eastern DRC. Though fundamental in ensuring the protection of women and children, these four units do not constitute a sufficient response to the pressing security needs of women and children in the DRC, nor are they sufficient in terms of helping victims have access to justice.

The major challenges identified by Ms Kolawali in response to this problem are:

- Lack of specialized training programs, including training on specialized investigating skills in the case of violations of the rights of women and children;
- Lack of equipment and facilities;
- Lack of strategic plans for investigating SGBV;
- Inability to provide timely response to victims of SGBV;
- Lack of access to justice for victims;
- Lack of human resources and funds.

In order to counter the existing challenges and to answer the pressing needs of women and children, the UN DPKO Standing Police Capacity was invited to assist MONUC and its Police Component to develop a strategic plan for the period 2009 to 2011. The primary objective of the strategic plan is to put in place a coordination mechanism between stakeholders and partners in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence in the DRC. The issue of sexual and gender-based violence is multidimensional, thus it does not only involve the work of the police but also that of the public, NGOs, and other stakeholders.

Some of the recommendations that were drafted following Olabisi Kolawali's visit to the MONUC include:

- Develop strategic plans for the investigation of SGBV crime, and provision of equipment and vehicles for that specific purpose;
- Provide adequate building facilities;
- Recruit of qualified police officers and ensuring gender balance;
- Develop specialized training programs (such as train-the-trainers, in-service training);
- Support the creation of special units throughout the country to tackle the phenomenon of sexual and gender-based violence;
- Encourage the Police Division within the UN DPKO to continue to impress upon Member States to sponsor a higher number of female police officers for deployment in peacekeeping missions; and
- The goal of the Special Police Units for the Protection of Women and Children (PSPEF) as a specialized unit is to reduce crime against women and children. However, the lack of adequate training, equipment, and the lack of professionalism to support practical responses to rape and other sexual and gender-based violence renders the unit ineffective. Therefore, there is serious need for financial bilateral assistance to achieve this goal.

#### **Presentation 5: Doreen Malambo, Zambia, Investigation Advisory Head of Women and Children Protection Service (WACPS), UNMIL**

Doreen Malambo started her presentation by saying that Liberia is not only the sole African country to have elected a woman as president, but also the only peacekeeping operations to have a female as a Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG). She went on to talk about the fact that Liberia is one of the few countries in the world to have put together a national plan of action on UN SCR 1325 with integrated elements from the new UN SCR 1820.

In terms of demographics, Ms Malambo reported that within the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) there are 1,204 UNPOL, among which 60 are female UNPOL officers and 135 are part of an all-female Indian Formed Police Unit (FPU). She followed by elaborating on the main roles of an UNPOL officer, which include mentoring, monitoring and advising the national police of Liberia.

Ms Malambo highlighted the important role that female police officers play in a post-conflict state like Liberia. She identified the following roles in particular:

- Fulfil the UN mandate in terms of the protection of the host population, especially vulnerable groups such as women and children;
- Encourage women and girls within the host state to participate in decision making at all levels and to be active in developing partnerships between the police and the community through community policing;
- Act as role models to both female police officers from the Liberia National Police (LNP) and to women and children from the community and to change/demystify their conception of the police service as a “macho” organisation;
- Stress the need for commitment to include all voices in the attempt to eradicate the scourge of SGBV in the host state; and
- Ensure that women do not fall through the gaps as they are relatively invisible in society as a whole.

Ms Malambo also identified some of the main challenges that female UNPOL officers have to overcome when they are in peacekeeping operations. These are:

- Culture
- Limited number of female officers in missions (less female manpower)
- Long working hours
- Rotation of female officers in key positions
- Language barriers
- Limited funds for programmes

Among the main impacts of the presence of UNPOL female officers in peacekeeping operations, Ms Malambo identified the following:

- A notable increase in recruitment of female police officers in the host state;
- Act as role models, especially for local women;
- Cultural changes vis-à-vis women in law enforcement positions;
- Increased trust with the community, particularly women and children; and
- Impart special skills to the LNP.

Ms Malambo concluded with two specific recommendations: the need to recruit more female UNPOL officers; and the need for more female UNPOL officers’ expertise to handle SGBV matters.

**Anne-Marie Orlor**, Deputy-Police Adviser with the UN Police Division, OROLSI, DPKO provided the concluding remarks. She reminded everyone in the room that UN SCR 1820 was adopted a year ago in response to the increasing use of SGBV as a tactic of war. As the perpetrators are most often men in uniform, how can we expect women victims of abuses to ask for help from men in uniform? Today, around 8% of all police officers deployed in peacekeeping operations are female. UN DPKO has launched a global effort to increase the number of female police officers from 8% to 20% in 2014. To be successful in this endeavour, the UN relies on Member States to provide missions with more female police officers. She invited Member States to examine their recruitment process and requirements, and make sure that these are favourable to the full inclusion and participation of women.

## **Part III: Key Observations and Conclusion**

### **Key Observations**

The roundtable brought together former and current female UNPOL officers from various peacekeeping operations (UNMIL, UNMIS, MONUC and MINUSTAH). Also present were Ambassador Henri-Paul Normandin, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations, Anne-Marie Orler, Deputy-Police Adviser, UN Police Division, OROLSI, DPKO as well as representatives from the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre.

The roundtable highlighted the importance of UN SCR 1820 and the ways in which it can best be implemented within a UN police framework. It also underlined the global efforts launched by the UN DPKO to heighten the number of female police officers working in peacekeeping operations from 8 to 20 % by 2014.

The roundtable also provided an opportunity for the UNPOL officers to inform the international community about the vital work that they are doing with regards to SGBV. The value added of female police officers in peacekeeping missions was stressed in every presentation, and all female UNPOL officers urged Police Contributing Countries (PPC) to increase the number of female police officers deployed to peacekeeping missions.

The roundtable proved successful in many ways. First, it provided a space for former and current female UNPOL officers to have their voices heard by the international community and discuss, from their perspectives, issues related to sexual and gender-based violence. This process was invaluable in understanding and demystifying the work of an UNPOL officer and the challenges they have to overcome on a daily basis.

The roundtable also highlighted the need to integrate a gender mainstreaming approach into all aspects of peacekeeping operations.

Moreover, the roundtable was successful in providing participants with an understanding of the necessity to increase the number of female police officers on the ground in an attempt to implement UN SCR 1325 and 1820. Both resolutions specifically ask for more female UNPOL officers in peacekeeping operations.

A recurring theme was the operational advantage of female police officers in peacekeeping missions. Female officers have an ability to gain the trust of the local community in which they work. In general, victims of SGBV crimes open up more easily to females in uniform than to men in uniform, given that men are the main perpetrators of SGBV crimes. It was also mentioned that female UNPOL officers have a great impact on women and girls in the host state, as they inspire them to be part of the security sector and to become police officers themselves.

### **Conclusion**

This roundtable provided a great opportunity for the international community to hear about the role and impact of female UNPOL officers in peacekeeping operations with a particular focus on SGBV. The testimonials of former and current female UNPOL officers were invaluable on the eve of the presentation of the Secretary General's report on Security Council Resolution 1820.

In conclusion, the roundtable achieved its aim of discussing the crucial importance of the participation of female UNPOL officers in peacekeeping operations, especially when it comes to their value-added in dealing with SGBV crimes. Undeniably, the roundtable heightened the level of understanding of international stakeholders with regards to SGBV and stressed the importance of sending more female police officers to peacekeeping operations.

# Part IV: Annexe

## Roundtable Programme

15 :00	<b>Opening Remarks:</b>  <b>Ambassador Henri-Paul Normandin</b> , Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations and  <b>Dave Beer</b> , Director Africa Program, Pearson Peacekeeping Centre.
15:20	<b>Guilavogui Gnalen</b> , Republic of Guinea, Gender Officer, UN Police in MINUSTAH (Haiti)
15:35	<b>Ann Menard</b> , Canada, Officer in Charge of the Protection of minors-victims of sexual crimes, UN Police in MINUSTAH (Haiti)
15:50	<b>Anne Tusiime</b> , Uganda, Gender, Child and Vulnerable Persons Protection Officer, UNMIS (Sudan)
16:05	<b>Olabisi Kolawole</b> , Nigeria, Investigations Officer, Standing Police Capacity (SPC), UN Police Division, OROLSI, DPKO (New York).
16:15	<b>Doreen Malambo</b> , Zambia, Investigation Advisory Head of Women and Children Protection Service (WACPS), co-located with the Liberian National Police, UNMIL (Liberia).
16:15- 17:30	Q&A
17:30-17:45	<b>Concluding remarks:</b>  <b>Anne-Marie Orlor</b> , Deputy-Police Adviser, UN Police Division, OROLSI, DPKO.