



מכון ון ליר בירושלים

THE VAN LEER JERUSALEM INSTITUTE

معهد فان لير في القدس

שוות • WIPS

Advancement of Women  
in the Public Sphere



## Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Israel

# Women, Peace, and Security: Security Council Resolution 1325 in the Israeli Context

Sarai Aharoni





שוות • WIPS  
המרכז לקידום נשים בזירה הציבורית



Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Israel

# Women, Peace, and Security: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in the Israeli Context

Dr. Sarai Aharoni

## Executive Summary

Academic Committee: **Prof. Naomi Chazan, Prof. Hanna Herzog**

**Ronna Brayer-Garb, Hadass Ben Eliyahu**

This research is supported by the European Union and the World Justice Project



Translation: **Esther Hecht**

Editing: **Deborah Schwartz**

Production: **Yona Ratzon**

In memory of Yehudit Sher  
An outstanding researcher and a beloved friend

**The Center for the Advancement of Women in the Public Sphere (WIPS)** was established at the Van Leer Jerusalem Institute in 2009 with the support of the Dafna Fund. **WIPS** is committed to gender mainstreaming as an overall strategy for promoting the democratic and civil status of women in diverse social groups. Through its focus on transforming the issue of gender inequality into a general social worldview that relates to both women and men and to all social structures, the **WIPS** center aims to make gender equality an inseparable part of the thought and action of legislators and decision makers in various areas

**WIPS** conducts research, promotes strategic thinking, and initiates projects and programs in areas relevant to implementing gender mainstreaming and gender equality in Israel. The founders of **WIPS** seek to make it a framework that brings together women's organizations, feminist activists, researchers, legislators, and decision makers, so that their dialogue and sharing of ideas will serve as a source of knowledge, guidance, and experience for anyone interested in promoting gender equality and gender mainstreaming in Israel. The center also promotes strategies to coordinate the efforts and impact of social action designed to promote the status of women and gender equality by connecting grassroots women's organizations, policy makers, legislators, and those acting for broad social change.

**WIPS** management: Prof. Naomi Chazan, Prof. Hanna Herzog, Hadass Ben Eliyahu, Ronna Brayer-Garb

## Executive Summary

Resolution 1325 is the first of seven resolutions dealing with women, peace, and security that were passed by the United Nations Security Council between 2000 and 2013. This series of resolutions is a historic attempt to integrate gender perspectives into the work of international organizations, and it seeks to combine three universal values—protection, equality, and peace—with an emphasis on the unique status of women. Viewed in a narrow context, what led to the development of norms in international law that address the status of women in war zones was the need to protect women and girls from sexual violence in times of conflict. To that end, Resolution 1325 states that the member states of the United Nations are responsible for honoring all treaties containing regulations regarding the status of women in time of war. They are also responsible for protecting women and girls from gender violence, especially rape and sexual exploitation, and for prosecuting anyone suspected of sexual crimes, particularly crimes that international courts have defined as war crimes, torture, or crimes against humanity. In the broader context these resolutions contain general normative requirements regarding the inclusion of women in processes of conflict prevention, conflict resolution, post-conflict rehabilitation, and recognition of the connection between the continuation of a military conflict and gender inequality in society.

This policy paper analyzes the patterns of dissemination and implementation of Resolution 1325 from a global perspective and examines several models of interpretation and localization that have been developed in Israel over the past decade. Localization occurs when local actors translate and adapt norms originally formulated in a universal language and identified with the agenda of the international community so that they express local values, interests, and political identities. In the field of international relations, according to Amitav Acharya (2004), “localization is the active construction (through discourse, framing, grafting and cultural selection) of foreign ideas by local actors, which results in the latter developing significant congruence with local beliefs and practices” (245).

From the point of view of local actors, localization is sometimes described as an act of “taking ownership,” through which they give meaning to foreign ideas and adapt them to the local system of beliefs and customs.

According to the approach on which this policy paper is based, the process of creating national and international regulations and laws pertaining to the rights of women is influenced by an array of geopolitical forces and by many multidimensional economic and political interests at the national and global levels. In the era of neoliberalism following the Cold War, women’s rights became the sign of democratization and economic development. Therefore, the rise in international awareness of the state of women in areas of conflict and the development of global standards for the implementation of Resolution 1325 are seen as expressions of “soft power” and

a means of broadening the international community's areas of intervention in politically unstable regions.

Knowing that the Israeli case deviates to some extent from the assumptions underlying Resolution 1325 and from the global view that there is a clear link between military conflicts and very low rates of economic development and gender equality, the key question is how Resolution 1325 and the requirements derived from it can be adapted to the situation here. Can a national action plan (NAP)—a policy tool that has been adopted by many countries over the past decade to implement the resolution—be suitable in the Israeli context, and what actions are required to promote gender equality in Israel in light of the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the changes in the nature of the regional conflict?

The first chapter of this policy paper is devoted to an examination of Resolution 1325, which has been disseminated globally and implemented since 2000. It deals at length with the advantages and disadvantages of adopting an NAP and other policy tools.

From our review it appears that adopting a national action plan enables a country to formulate an agreed-upon list of public priorities, divide up areas of responsibility, and establish organized coordinating bodies to spearhead the budgetary planning for promoting women's rights for a predetermined period. Moreover, countries that adopt an NAP for implementing Resolution 1325 acquire more political legitimacy in the international sphere because of their ability to coordinate the intra-national with the standard global goals. At the same time, national action plans that are written in conjunction with women's organizations enable civil society organizations to make their voices heard in the international and national spheres, propose solutions to obstacles to gender equality, criticize the existing policy for promoting women's rights, and serve as local "gatekeepers."

**The main conclusion to be drawn from this first chapter is that the preliminary processes for formulating an NAP provide an opportunity for a local discourse and for raising awareness of issues related to the connection between gender, security, and peace.** However, these processes often lead to conflicts, because localization is an interpretive process and involves negotiation between ideological, political, and strategic approaches toward foreign policy, defense policy, and feminism. These negotiations reflect the "interpretive space" and the way in which various actors understand the local political reality and its connection to women's rights. One might say that because women's organizations are key agents in disseminating this set of norms, the quality of the relations between them and state institutions has led to the variations in local interpretations of Resolution 1325 since its adoption by the Security Council.

The second chapter of this document focuses on changes in the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict since 2000 and the gender influences resulting from these changes as the background for understanding Amendment 6C to the Women's Equal Rights Law, which determines the mechanism for officially implementing Resolution 1325 in Israel. From the analysis in this chapter we learn that contrary to the usual argument in the literature regarding women in

regions of conflict—namely, that military conflicts lead to immediate intensification of gender inequality—the Israeli case shows that **despite the escalation during the Second Intifada, the State of Israel succeeded in maintaining long-term achievements and even succeeded in broadening the areas of legislation and government intervention, especially in the area of protection against gender-based violence.**

This process was made possible, to a great extent, by the trend toward depoliticization of the feminist struggles, their separation from issues related directly to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and their framing as sociocultural issues. Nevertheless, this framing was a double-edged sword because it helped obscure the deep changes that had taken place in the status of Jewish and Palestinian women in Israel and the occupied territories following the collapse of the peace process, the change in the nature of the conflict, and the escalation in the repeated rounds of violence since 2000.

The main conclusion to be drawn from this chapter is that the characteristics of the current conflict, and especially the blurring of the distinctions between the battlefield and home front and between combatants and civilians, have clear gendered aspects. These aspects include the increase in the number of women harmed by political violence; the gradual transformation of the urban space and the home into military targets; the high percentage of posttraumatic stress disorder, anxiety, depression, health problems, dysfunction, and physical disability among women; a drop in reports of gender violence in times of escalation; an increase in the use of small arms in domestic violence; a worsening of the economic circumstances of women in marginal groups and their ability to earn a living; the appearance of a media discourse that sees the Jewish woman as a passive victim of political violence who must be protected by military means; and the adoption of legal regulations and legislation that limit the right of Palestinian citizens of Israel to have a family. **This situation casts doubt on the potential for specific legislative acts designed to promote due representation of women to bring about broad changes. It also reveals the immediate need to create complementary civil mechanisms to document and monitor the influence of the continuing conflict on the status of women and girls, and the need to introduce gender mainstreaming to the coordinated activities of the systems that handle emergency and crisis situations.**

Chapter Three examines several competing interpretations of the Security Council resolutions regarding women, peace, and security that have developed in Israel. The main argument of this chapter is that these interpretations have been influenced not only by the inherent vagueness of Resolution 1325 and by the models for its implementation that have begun to develop in the international sphere, but also by the local history and the cultural, political, and social conditions in the state and the region. **An examination of the Israeli case reveals the gradual development of four interpretations of Resolution 1325, some of which contradict each other.** Different policy tools and directions of action are derived from each interpretation:



- The first interpretation is derived from the Supreme Court rulings regarding the implementation of the amendment to the Women's Equal Rights Law, which is a mechanism for official implementation of the resolution by the State of Israel. According to this interpretation, Resolution 1325 is to be seen as the expression of a norm of equality and as a tool for achieving due representation of women in political decision-making processes concerning foreign affairs and security.
- The second interpretation appears in the language of the law itself, but has not yet been interpreted by a court or by state institutions. According to this interpretation the resolution must be seen as an opportunity to broaden the representation of women from diverse groups—that is, an expression of the “diversity principle” in decision-making processes regarding national policy making.
- The third interpretation characterizes the activity of women's peace organizations, international foundations, and delegations of foreign countries. According to this interpretation, Resolution 1325 is an expression of an international norm of striving for peace and justice. This interpretation emphasizes the importance of the empowerment of the activities of women's protest organizations and the importance of supporting political dialogue between women on both sides of the conflict in order to increase the visibility, legitimacy, and influence of the women's peace movements and to help promote justice, reconciliation, and democratization.
- The fourth interpretation characterizes the activity of local and supranational feminist women's organizations and of international foundations. According to this interpretation, Resolution 1325 is a normative framework that enables the broadening of the concept of national and international security, reshaping it in keeping with the idea of “human security.” This interpretation emphasizes the need to protect women and girls from sexual and gender violence, to expand the policy of enforcement and punishment of perpetrators, to broaden the array of services provided to women in all areas of life, and especially to maintain their personal and economic security.

**On December 14, 2014, the Israeli government announced the establishment of an interministerial team to form and consolidate a national action plan for implementing UNSCR 1325. This announcement is a great achievement for the women's and the civil society organizations in Israel who worked for over two years to formulate a comprehensive action plan. We hope that beyond this symbolic recognition of the women's organizations' vision, the government will define clear goals for advancing gender equality in Israel, including a suitable budget for their implementation.**

## Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Before the December 2014 announcement, the existing Israeli model for the implementation of Resolution 1325 was limited to legislation to increase women's representation in forums and committees that shape national policy. The announcement is a first step, symbolizing Israel's joining the **global trend** toward formulating national action plans (NAP).
2. The Israeli model's previous narrow interpretation **did not reflect the immediate and long-term challenges in promoting gender equality at the national level** and did not give satisfactory expression to the other interpretations of Resolution 1325. In its announcement, the government declared its commitment to increase women's representation, to reinforce women's security and protect them from all forms of violence, and to adopt a gender-mainstreaming strategy in decision making, including equal opportunities for women in all areas of life. We hope these goals will indeed be realized by the government's plan.
3. To formulate an NAP, **the government's announcement from December 2014 must be translated into practical action that will lead to the establishment of an authorized government body in which civil society organizations have advisory status.** This process must be carried out in conjunction with women's organizations that represent diverse social groups.
4. To promote a national action plan, **the overall budget that will be invested in promoting gender equality over the long term must be defined in advance. It is also necessary to establish monitoring and advisory mechanisms in conjunction with civil society; formulate clear, agreed-upon, and measurable goals; and to include clauses dealing with the needs and worldviews of women from diverse social groups.**
5. In Resolution 1889 the Security Council calls upon the member states of the United Nations and the civil society organizations "to ensure that all country reports to the Security Council provide information on the impact of situations of armed conflict on women and girls, their particular needs in post-conflict situations, and obstacles to attaining those needs." To meet these requirements, **Israel must create a civil mechanism that will document the effects of the ongoing conflict on the status of women and girls, monitor them, and integrate a gendered perspective in the coordination of the systems responsible for emergency and crisis management.**
6. **If peace negotiations resume, action must be taken to incorporate gendered perspectives in the peace agreements.** This can be done by appointing women experts on gender who will examine the gendered implications of different aspects of the proposed agreements regarding family life, military-society relations, disarmament, the role of multinational forces, socioeconomic rights, and institutional-constitutional reforms.
7. **If peace negotiations do not resume, action must be taken to include women experts, including representatives of women's organizations, to incorporate gendered perspectives** in the Israeli delegations to ceasefire discussions, in multinational forces brought to the region, and in unilateral actions whose aim is to change the existing political situation.

