

Lt Col BERGMANS

Item 1C

(Slide 1) Let us move on to the next point on the agenda, Item 1C: the update on the status of the recommendations to implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on 'Women, Peace and Security' within NATO, the recommendations that we produced last year.

"What happened" with them? Well, you can find the published version on your table. They don't only 'look' nice; they 'are' good recommendations.

As I see many new faces and since it is 1 year ago, I am honoured and pleased to have the opportunity to give you a short briefing on the content and the aim of guidelines, a briefing similar to the one I gave to the military committee on the 22nd November, and put you in the picture again.

As determined in our TOR's, the Committee's principal mission is to advise NATO's military leadership and member nations on critical issues and policies affecting service women in the NATO Forces.

It is a consultative body, meeting once a year during one week, which aims at promoting the most effective use of the capabilities of women serving in the Armed Forces of the Alliance. Furthermore, it supports the Alliance nations by providing informed guidance on gender-related and diversity issues and more specifically, operations-related lessons learnt from service women.

(Slide 2) According to our mission we, the National Delegates of the CWINF, developed a set of recommendations addressed to NATO's military authorities as well as to NATO Nations to implement Resolution 1325, recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peace keeping operations. These recommendations were finalized during the latest annual meeting of the committee, which has taken place in Berlin, last June.

(Slide 3) Resolution 1325 reaffirms the special role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and it stresses the importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. It calls for an increased representation of women at all decision making levels in the security field. It recognizes that women have a vital role to play in conflict prevention, peace negotiation, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction.

Consequently, we recommended that improving the gender balance in civilian and military operations is a must. Only an organization that truly respects and fully exploits the diversity of backgrounds, skills and experiences of its members can operate efficiently in the complex security environment typical of today's conflicts.

Of course, this also includes the recognition of the role of local women in the establishment of a peaceful environment. Therefore, the Committee recommended considering the benefits derived from the local population, women as well as men, as contributors to mission accomplishment. Women, as individuals or through

women-led local organizations, may have, obtain or share information and points of view that differ from men's. This information - analyzed under a gender-sensitive prism - may become important and valuable, tactical intelligence and contribute to increased situational awareness, thus enhancing force protection.

The effectiveness and the impact of the work on gender should be assessed, lessons identified and learnt.

(Slide 4)The recommendations emphasized that although UN member states play a critical role in the implementation of the resolution, there is also an important role for international actors like NATO to provide a common framework and a coherent approach encompassing inherent accountability and monitoring mechanisms. In our opinion, NATO should assume a larger responsibility and go further than beyond mere awareness. Taking concrete steps to implement this resolution in the field and to support increased awareness and a sense of ownership could lead to institutional and personal accountability.

(Slide 5) Mobilizing the actors that are normally involved in the processes, the committee proposed an integrated approach to introduce a gender factor in three main areas related to NATO's operations: in the Operational Planning Process and in Operations, in Training and Education, and finally in the Evaluation Process.

Where relevant, especially in the decision-making process, these actors should actively and instinctively take into account the possible side-effects of their actions on the respective situation of

men and women. This means 'building awareness' and 'achieving expertise' to assess the respective impact'.

In order to achieve gender awareness and proactiveness, training is essential. Therefore, the use of special expertise - gender expertise - should be considered. The different stakeholders should strive for ownership: indeed they need to consider this gender sensitive approach as part of their tasks and responsibilities.

Therefore, the committee recommended that NATO Nations should integrate gender awareness training into basic and advanced military training at all levels and ranks. The existing training tools should be reviewed to incorporate the gender perspective and to ensure they are free of gender bias or stereotypes. NATO authorities were also recommended to consider, where relevant, the inclusion of the gender perspective in the education and training they are responsible for.

(Slide 6) We also recommended that NATO authorities develop a generic code of conduct integrating the gender perspective and take appropriate measures to protect civilians from gender-based violence. Personnel participating in NATO-led operations come from varying cultures and legal systems as well as represent different levels of training and experience. Nevertheless, in pursuance of their mission, it ought to be required that all personnel present the same standards of personal and

professional behavior in order to contribute to the moral cohesion of the operation, to guarantee appropriate relations with the local population to engender and maintain both confidence and trust in NATO. The standards of this behavior must be complementary to the legal obligations of personnel in accordance with international law and the law of contributing nations. Not adhering to the required standards of behavior could be considered as misconduct and would result in national disciplinary measures. Not having or not enforcing such a standard however could arguably be blamed on leadership.

Having a strict code of conduct prohibiting sexual abuse and exploitation by deployed personnel, incorporated into the relevant planning documents of each operation, implemented with proper training and enforced at all levels, is essential to prevent sexual violence, to fight impunity and thus ensure accountability.

(Slide 7) Introducing the gender factor is not 'a soft issue'; it lays at the core of security.

Therefore the CWINF recommended that NATO nations and NATO authorities mainstream the gender perspective in accordance with resolution 1325.

(Slide 8) We, your EC, finalised the publication of the recommendations in Sept-Okt last year. They were published on our website, and are available for distribution within the NATO HK. I briefed the military committee on this issue on November, 22nd. It was decided that a working group should be appointed to decide on how to implement UNSCR 1325 in NATO-led operations and missions.

Following this briefing, during the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council-Ambassadorial meeting on 12 Dec 07 it was decided that a Military Concept should be developed by the NATO military Authorities for approval by the North Atlantic Council to mainstream gender issues in the work of the military and in all phases of NATO-led Operations and missions. Partners should be involved to the maximum extent possible. The tasking to the NMA's came in January 08.

Until now I am not informed on the way ahead within NATO-IMS.

Thank you for your attention and it will be a pleasure for me to take your questions.