



# NATO embraces gender perspectives and demonstrates readiness to promote change

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# COVID-19: at the Heart of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda

## Reflections on the Gendered Impacts of the Pandemic

The current pandemic sweeping the globe has exercised many minds; academics, policy-makers, health care practitioners, gender experts, security experts, warlords and politicians have all had their say. The gendered aspects of this crisis in public health have received much attention. This was not the case in previous pandemics. This is ultimately good news for the WPS community of interest. At last the message seems to be getting through – that crises and conflicts impact differently on men and women, boys and girls and that a gender lens is acknowledged as key to a fuller understanding of any given situation.

Some commentators have suggested that the WPS agenda has never been more relevant than at this time of crisis. Experts suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic, with its multifaceted security dimensions, is, in fact, proving the centrality of the WPS agenda to contemporary global peace and security challenges. The issues that are so often highlighted by the WPS community are profoundly relevant to this pandemic too. It may be useful to reflect on what some of those issues are.

*“If ever people-centric and gender sensitive approaches were required – it is surely now.”*

Firstly, a gendered analysis is a key enabler in a crisis. The WPS agenda calls for gendered analyses of the causes and consequences of crises, and the mapping of individuals, communities and institutions involved.

This analysis is essential in ensuring that early warning, preparation, mitigation, response and recovery measures take into account a broader picture that can inform a more effective and sustainable set of actions. Sex-disaggregated data is crucial to understanding the impact of the virus and are necessary to inform the response and recovery strategies needed. Understanding the differential implications on men and women of policies that are established is also critical.

In the case of COVID-19, this would mean investigating and addressing, for example:

**The gendered impact of the course of the pandemic** – who gets sick and why? Indications across the world (although sex-disaggregated data are as yet incomplete) are that significantly more males die from the virus - what are the impacts of such findings? For example, what are the implications of more female-headed households, more elderly women living alone going forward? Such factors will have socio-economic implications that must be considered to reduce longer-term and future insecurity.

**The gendered nature of the health workforce and the significant risks that health workers incur.** Interestingly, the OECD reported recently that although the majority of the healthcare workforce is female - nearly 50% of doctors; 85% of nurses and midwives; 90% of long-term care providers - women still make up only a minority of senior leadership positions in health.

**The gendered nature of caregiving responsibilities** when schools and child-care facilities close and the bulk of caregiving responsibilities are shouldered by women.



**The gendered implications of imposed quarantine**, such as whether women’s and men’s different physical, cultural, security, and sanitary needs are recognized. In terms of individual security needs, reports from many countries reflect significant spikes in cases of domestic abuse, for example, and responses have included ensuring shelters remain open, helplines are staffed, and police training programs and public awareness campaigns are activated.

Secondly, the WPS emphasis on women’s participation and agency in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding is also of central relevance in the current crisis. In both conflict and crisis, local actors, often women, are at the frontlines. Women not only comprise 70% of the global healthcare workforce, they also dominate the community social work and civil society sectors in nations across the world.

## Did you know?

NATO is playing an active role in supporting the response to COVID-19 - helping ensure that supplies and equipment get where they need to go. Spain and Italy requested medical supplies – the Czech Republic answered the call, sending 10,000 protective medical suits to each, along with other supplies. Turkey sent an A-400M military cargo plane full of masks, medical suits and disinfectants. All of this and more has been coordinated through NATO's Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center. These efforts directly support health workers in local communities, enabling them to continue helping patients in need of treatment. And this is only part of how NATO is supporting communities in need.

Click [here](#) for more information about what NATO is doing in response to the coronavirus.



These women are stepping up to the threats presented by COVID-19, by mobilizing and actively responding to the multiple threats it presents. These local actors are essential to the response and recovery process because their knowledge can inform and improve interventions. So their participation and inclusion in the assessment of each context, decision making, design and delivery of interventions is crucial. The Civil Society Advisory Panel that NATO works with has offered valuable insights from their respective nations in this regard.

Thirdly, the WPS agenda also calls for greater participation of women in politics and in decision-making on matters of peace and security. The corona crisis is revealing the relevance of this call to inclusive leadership. It is worth noting the effective responses from a number of female world leaders who reacted to this crisis decisively and proactively in, for example, Finland, Germany, New Zealand, and Norway.

Finally, the WPS agenda advocates human security approaches that are people-centric and gender-sensitive. If ever people-centric and gender-sensitive approaches were required – it is surely now. The COVID-19 crisis is proving to be a game-changer in the emerging security threat discourse and, in common with the WPS agenda, is challenging traditional concepts of individual, state and national security.

Both highlight that new ways of looking at security are needed, as indeed are shifts in priorities, resource allocation, and skill sets that put the needs of both women and men at the core of what is meant by security in any given society.

2020 is a big year for the Women, Peace and Security agenda with so many significant landmarks to reflect upon and celebrate, including 20 years since the UN Security Council's adoption of resolution 1325, the first of a series of UN resolutions that put women at the center of the global peace and security agenda. The global community also marks the 25th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995). By any standard, this was planned as a pivotal year for the accelerated realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls everywhere. While much of what was planned for 2020 has been postponed or cancelled, perhaps COVID-19, and the new realities it will herald, will prompt a deeper appreciation of just how crucial the WPS Agenda truly is.

# Preventing and Responding to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence: Essential to NATO's Operational Effectiveness

JFC Naples hosts workshop on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence with key stakeholders from NATO, UN, and civil society



On 20 and 21 February 2020, Joint Forces Command (JFC) Naples conducted a workshop focused on NATO's commitment to the Prevention of and Response to Conflict-Related Sexual Violence (CRSV). There were 48 workshop attendees from all levels of the NATO Command Structure and NATO HQ.

The two-day workshop consisted of keynote speeches by JFC Commander Admiral Foggo and Clare Hutchinson, NATO Special Representative on Women, Peace and Security, presentations from international partner organizations and civil society; Nadia's Initiative, the United Nations Department of Peace Operations and "Medica" Zenica; and briefings from NATO subject matter experts. Discussions focused on what role NATO can play to help prevent and respond to CRSV. In particular, the following recommendations were made:

**(1) Terminology:** NATO should be clear on terminology as currently it uses the term Conflict Related Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (CRSGBV), whereas the United Nations and others use the term CRSV. In addition, NATO should ensure that all personnel have a clear understanding of the difference between Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), in line with NATO's new policy, and CRSV in order to be able to recognize both situations and respond effectively.

**(2) Understanding of mandate development:** Personnel with subject matter expertise should be able to contribute to developing mandates for NATO missions and operations, so that preventing and responding to CRSV can be specifically considered.

**(3) Reporting:** NATO should develop clear operational guidance on how to report CRSV and share information with relevant organizations.

**(4) NATO responsibility:** NATO should have a clear understanding of what is and what is not NATO's responsibility in relation to CRSV.

The workshop highlighted that there are gaps in the guidance for NATO forces when it comes to CRSV, particularly in terms of a clear remit and actions that NATO should and should not take in relation to CRSV. The primary recommendation from the workshop is that NATO should develop a policy on CRSV to provide clear guidance on how to implement the strategic level military guidelines on the ground to ensure a consistent and effective approach.

## Did you know?

There are three primary documents that provide guidance to NATO's Military Authorities in relation to CRSV.

- NATO Military Guidelines on the prevention of and response to CRSV state that "all Commanders must recognize the responsibility to act within their mandate in order to prevent and respond to CRSV".

- The 2017 Bi-Strategic Command Directive 40-1 directs that Commanders must "undertake, either within their organization, or in close coordination with international or local actors to prevent and respond CRSV".

- The Allied Command Operations Gender Functional Planning Guide provides suggestions on prevention measures.

However, NATO would benefit from concrete operational guidance for Commanders, particularly on preventative measures and responses to CRSV, as well as reporting events after CRSV is recognized.

# “Peace is more likely to prevail when women are empowered and intrinsically engaged in its creation”

## Interview with Admiral James G. Foggo III, Commander of JFC Naples

After February’s conference, the WPS team approached Admiral James Foggo, Commander of JFC Naples, for a few follow-up questions. Admiral Foggo has long been a staunch supporter of the Women, Peace and Security mandate in and beyond NATO, and he has made the integration of gender perspectives in all of JFC Naples’ work an absolute priority. Thank you Admiral, for your personal dedication to this topic, and for all your efforts to advance the principles of gender equality at NATO.



The mission of Allied Joint Force Command Naples is to prepare for, plan and conduct military operations in order to preserve the peace, security and territorial integrity of Alliance member states throughout SACEUR’s Area of Responsibility and beyond. How important is the Women, Peace and Security mandate to the successful implementation of that mission?

Thank you for affording me the opportunity to reflect once again on this very important topic. I have been passionate in working to inculcate an instinctive inclusion of the WPS mandate in the planning and execution of all our JFC Naples missions. And not only should it be an inherent part of the planning process, but we must also strive to live those ideals on a daily basis in all the work we do here in the Headquarters.

Conflict disproportionately impacts women and girls and I am determined that wherever in the world our JFC Naples missions are engaged, we bring a gender lens to our work and encourage our partner nations to do the same. This is essential as gender equality is not simply a matter of social justice but also key to a sustainable security landscape. Put simply, peace is more likely to prevail when women are empowered and intrinsically engaged in its creation.

When did you first become aware of the importance of integrating gender into operations; what was the “a-ha” moment when you realized there was a practical reason for promoting gender in operational tasks?

That gender is a crucial consideration in operational tasks should not be a surprise to the thinking military person, but I regret that only in the last few years has it become part of the formal planning agenda rather than an implied task. We have the great work of the UN to thank in this regard, with UNSCR 1325. In fact, 2020 marks the 20th anniversary of the passage of UNSCR 1325, calling for the full inclusion of women in peace and security initiatives. As we celebrate this milestone, it’s also an opportunity to review and refresh our approach, ensuring that we lead from the front on this while always committing to its tenets through our actions. I am proud that NATO was an early adopter, and grateful for Clare Hutchinson’s leadership of a policy that perfectly reflects our shared values of individual liberty, democracy, human rights and, of course, our obligations under the Charter of the UN.

*“2020 marks the 20th anniversary of the passage of UNSCR 1325, calling for the full inclusion of women in peace and security initiatives. As we celebrate this milestone, it’s also an opportunity to review and refresh our approach, ensuring that we lead from the front on this while always committing to its tenets through our actions.”*

As for an ‘a-ha’ moment, well I’m the husband and father of professional women who have excelled in their respective fields, and all my career I’ve served alongside and worked with remarkable women from every nationality and background. A world where women are empowered is a better, more stable, civilized, and compassionate one and that is something we must all strive for, not simply with rhetoric but through meaningful action.

**Your work with FemWise – a network of African women involved in conflict prevention and mediation created in 2017 – has been very successful, and there are many good practices to capture. What can NATO learn from your collaboration with women’s groups like FemWise and what more should we do to reach out to women in the Global South?**

I am enormously proud of the partnership that JFC Naples has with the incredible women of FemWise Africa through the auspices of the African Union. Many of these women, all of whom are leaders in their fields, have personal experience in conflict prevention and resolution. It is important that we help give them a voice and also take the opportunity to learn from them. As you know, the principles of integration, inclusiveness and integrity guide NATO’s implementation of the WPS Action Plan. Through the lens of experience of the FemWise cohort, we are able to bring substance to our actions rather than simply a philosophical approach to the WPS agenda. Our goal here at JFC Naples, in partnership with the African Union and their FemWise organization, is to combat the root causes of regional instability which lie in poor governance and a fragile or compromised rule of law. We are doing this together. This requires collaboration across all elements of civil society and I see the FemWise network as fundamental to that; this model of working together is one that could be applied more broadly across the entirety of NATO. Our JFC Naples Hub for the South will continue its work with the African Union and FemWise to ensure that women’s voices are heard in all that we do in the region.



**JFC Naples recently hosted a successful workshop on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. What were your takeaways from hearing some of the conversations and what more can NATO do to protect and support women and girls, men and boys, from sexual violence in conflict?**

It was a great honor to host the Women, Peace & Security workshop on Conflict-Related Sexual Violence at our Headquarters in Naples. The workshop sought to enhance understanding of the WPS agenda in the preparation, planning and conduct of NATO and NATO-led operations. We heard from an array of speakers and I will not deny that much of that testimony was difficult listening. A theoretical approach to the tenets of the WPS agenda is one thing, to hear the harrowing details of the experiences of the most vulnerable in our societies during conflict and the evil that man is capable of wantonly inflicting is another. The lived and ongoing trauma of the Yazidi people in Iraq was detailed so cogently by representatives from Nadia’s Initiative, a charity founded by Ms. Nadia Murad, co-recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2018, which is dedicated to rebuilding communities in crisis and advocating globally for victims of violence.

This account was a salutary example of how NATO must strive to combat sexual violence both in conflict and in the post-conflict landscape since an apparent return to relative normality does not mean that suffering is not still being inflicted on a population but rather that it tends to be more hidden.

**NATO HQ’s Women, Peace and Security team recently released a report on the role and efficacy of Gender Advisers. You have worked very closely with your Gender Advisers and have demonstrated how such a role can be effective. How do you think Gender Advisers and Gender Focal Points can deliver most assistance and guidance?**

We can’t expect high standards of governance and adherence to equality in other organizations if we aren’t wholeheartedly living the values ourselves. Our GENAD holds a key, full-time role in the Naples HQ and is a principal participant in an array of planning and operational delivery programs. He is also the link between the Headquarters and Ms. Clare Hutchinson, the Secretary General’s Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security. Clare has been an outstanding advocate for the WPS agenda and we greatly welcome her support of our work with FemWise and her wise counsel. I see Gender Advisers and Gender Focal Points as honest friends to the leadership of any organization, and that is why they must be empowered individuals. The rank is irrelevant – I am only interested in their insight. And my GENAD is not responsible for the implementation of a policy: that lies with commanders and leaders which is why I want to hear it how it is, irrespective of whether that’s good or bad. Speaking truth to power is fundamental to the work of the GENAD.

**Your term as COM JFC Naples is soon coming to an end. What advice do you have for your successor, how can s/he continue to advance the Women, Peace and Security agenda at NATO and in Naples?**

It has been the honor of my life to lead JFC Naples and to work with the Italian people in this beautiful country; I know that my successor will be served by an outstanding staff, military and civilian, all of whom are committed to our Mission and to doing good in this world. The Women, Peace and Security agenda is now fundamental in the work of this Headquarters. I am proud that our partnership with the African Union, with FemWise, and with global ambassadors and advocates for women’s empowerment sets a standard for others to emulate. I know that the work will continue and I look forward to the day that gender is no longer a distinctive part of operational planning but instead a given, something that we instinctively incorporate into the tapestry of our missions.



# Gender: May the Force be with you

## NATO Secretary General welcomes Gender Advisors to NATO Headquarters

NATO deploys gender advisors – military and civilian – across its commands, operations, and missions. These men and women operate at strategic and operational levels and are valuable resources to Commanders, who are responsible for the overall integration of gender perspectives into planning, execution, and evaluation.

On Monday 2 March, Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg welcomed a number of our gender advisors to NATO Headquarters in Brussels for an event at which they – along with gender advisors from other international organizations, representatives of civil society, academics, and NATO officials – discussed how integrating gender perspectives enhances operational effectiveness.

It has been nearly 20 years since the adoption of UNSCR 1325, and the WPS team at NATO HQ is undertaking a number of projects to evaluate how NATO has changed since the Women, Peace and Security agenda was first launched. As part of this, we sought to identify the current challenges and complexities NATO gender advisors face and to examine ways to strengthen their institutional capacity across the NATO Command Structure. Interviews were conducted with current and former NATO gender advisors, officials within NATO's civilian and military structures, representatives of national governments, staff at the Nordic Centre for Gender in Military Operations (NATO's Department Head on gender in the military), and other experts in the field.

The event on March 2nd was the culmination of this project, which was supported by the Permanent Representation of Germany to NATO. So what have we learned about the work of GENADs across NATO?

**Gender advisors make NATO more effective.** In Iraq and Afghanistan, where we are training and advising local forces, gender advisors help to make their institutions more effective, inclusive, and sustainable.



Across our Commands, gender advisors help us develop the gender-smart standards and plans that we need to be more effective. In Brussels, they help to ensure that the policies we develop and the guidance we give to our Military Authorities takes gender into account.

### **NATO would benefit from a better understanding of the role gender advisors play and the value they add.**

The importance of gender considerations and how they contribute to operational effectiveness is not always well understood across the Alliance. Gender advisors who contributed to this project noted that some spend a significant amount of time explaining what they do and why it matters. While basic training on gender perspectives is provided to most serving in NATO structures, more work is needed to deepen the understanding of how incorporating gender perspectives applies across NATO's activities and how gender advisors and gender focal points help to facilitate this work.

**Gender advisors would benefit from more job-specific education and training as well as a community of practice.** Interviews revealed that while personnel deployed as NATO gender advisors are dedicated professionals interested in advancing NATO's effectiveness, few had previous experience related to gender.

In addition, opportunities for developing gender expertise within national structures are very limited. More opportunities for potential gender advisors and gender focal points to build expertise – at the national and NATO levels – would serve the Alliance well. In addition, mechanisms for sharing information among gender advisors would support the Alliance's ability to build on the learning generated across NATO structures.

**Leadership is essential.** Gender advisors made clear that the support of their commanders was critical to success. Leadership support not only ensures that GENADs get the access they need to do their work but also engenders the kind of whole-of-organization approach needed to improve our effectiveness by incorporating gender perspectives. The Secretary General used the opportunity on 2 March to express his personal commitment to providing leadership and support to ensure continued progress on integrating gender into NATO's work and thanked gender advisors for their valuable contributions.

# Deputy Secretary General Recognizes Champions of Women, Peace and Security

## NATO HQ's second-ever Gender Integration Award goes to the Defence Investment Division



This is a concerted effort to implement positive changes to how we recruit and retain a more diverse workforce. There is plenty still to do in this area including in DI, but we have established a mindset and approach that incorporates awareness of gender bias throughout the process.

*This year's honorable mentions went to William Alberque, Diana DeVivo, and Krisztian Meszaros. Thanks to all four for your wonderful contributions to this newsletter!*

**How has your office integrated gender into its policies and activities in 2019? Could you give us a concrete example or two? What difference has this made or do you hope it will make in the future?**

On the occasion of International Women's Day 2020, the Women, Peace and Security team organized NATO's second-ever 'Gender Integration Award' ceremony. The Gender Integration Award is a token of appreciation given to the International Staff Division that made most progress integrating gender perspectives in its work. In addition, we acknowledged the efforts of individuals whose personal dedication to integrating gender at NATO deserves an honorable mention. NATO Deputy Secretary General Mircea Geoană kindly agreed to lead the conduct of the ceremony and hand out the award and certificates.

**We approached this year's winners and asked them a few follow-up questions about the integration of gender perspectives in their work. On behalf of Defence Investment, our winning Division, we spoke with the Assistant Secretary General, Camille Grand. Camille, what have you and your team done to promote Women, Peace and Security within your Division?**

**Camille:** Although in DI we benefited from the commitment of a small team which was instrumental in our efforts, promoting the WPS agenda is a job for everybody. I am also clear that leadership at all levels across the HQ and beyond needs to visibly and genuinely commit to raising awareness and keeping this on our agenda through deeds and actions. Change and progress is not inevitable – we need to work at it. In 2019 we placed a specific focus on how we implement a Divisional recruitment policy, working hard to look at the way we approach recruitment from start to finish from the language we use in recruitment notices to how we build recruitment panels to ensuring all those involved have received unconscious bias training to improve the quality and analysis of our selections and interviews.

**Camille:** First and foremost, I consider myself fortunate to be supported by an innovative and creative WPS team and their positive, and necessarily persistent, approach has led to a much more inclusive and honest way of looking at how the Division can tackle the issue of integrating gender into our business. We kicked off our 2019 plan by taking the time as a Division to think deeply about the impact of gendered policies and listen to the views of our team to consider what changes would make a real impact at both a Divisional level, and on our work with, and on behalf of, nations.

One specific example I am proud of is the launch of piece of work with the Conference of National Armaments Directors (CNAD) to look at the integration of gender perspectives in the development of military capabilities. But why focus on the CNAD? This was not an obvious choice, even for the armament community. Well, the CNAD and its sub-structure is quite frankly enormous, with over 100 different bodies from across the NATO nations and partners who provide NATO with its technical depth in capability development. To me, if we can agree a tangible set of actions to more systematically integrate gender perspectives at the grass roots of capability development, we will have made a significant impact on how the lines of development, including equipment, training, doctrine, interoperability will be shaped. This matters because far too often we consider how to integrate gender perspectives at the 'finished product' stage rather than accounting for 50% of the population upfront! A typical test case was body armor standards. Considering gender at the start of the capability cycle is a win:win situation for all involved and will make us more efficient and effective as an Alliance.

**Diana:** In the last two years, the NCI Agency has launched a series of initiatives to integrate a gender perspective in all of the Agency's tasks and functions and to mainstream and embed the WPS agenda across the Agency's policies, programs and projects with a particular focus on technology, women's empowerment and gender equality within the NCI Agency. As a result, a "movement" of Agency Change Agents that are determined to make a difference in this area arose and the awareness on those topics dramatically increased. In 2019, we implemented several projects to advance the WPS Agenda, from engaging with schools to talk to girls about STEM subjects, to regular high-level breakfast discussions to share best practices and lessons learned in this area with other International Organizations, the private sector and academia.

*"For too many people and organizations, the concept of gender integration is considered a minority issue and an afterthought, rather than an issue that helps framing the right answer. Once we 'break the code' on that problem I think we will be in a much better place!"*

**William:** Arms control has been very often perceived as a technical more than a policy issue and as such confined to senior (white-haired) men. I am very conscious about these characteristics of the arms control world, but I am also extremely pleased with NATO's efforts. We try to integrate gender in the DNA of arms control. Let me give you a specific example. Already in 2016, NATO developed - with all the relevant international stakeholders - guidelines for mainstreaming gender in Small Arms and Light Weapons activities, focusing on providing clear, comprehensive advice and guidance to policymakers, practitioners and other stakeholders in integrating gender. In 2019 these guidelines were revised to ensure that they meet the needs of the current security challenges and accomplishments in the WPS agenda. We are also developing a clear implementation plan with concrete tools for their practical use (training, etc.). We do not want these guidelines to be another document on the shelf. Let me underline, this is not an effort to just increase numbers. We are beyond numbers. With that effort we want to address the assumptions on the way we conduct our work.

**Krisztian:** We are in a special, you might say privileged situation, in the Private Office, as the Women, Peace and Security team is part of the Office of the Secretary General. So Clare and her colleagues are the ones who make sure that gender, as well as broader human security considerations appear in our work. Clare is part of the inner decision-making circle of the Secretary General, she participates in the almost daily Private Office meetings and she is the number one adviser of our leadership on all issues gender.

Having said that, I do have a special role in the Private Office as the gender focal point. I manage the Women, Peace and Security and human security portfolios and make sure the relevant decisions are prepared in time for the Secretary General, the Deputy Secretary General and the Director of the Private Office.

## Did you know?

25 years ago, women from around the world gathered in Beijing for the 4th world conference on women. The result of that gathering was international consensus on twelve areas of concern deemed critical to address in order to achieve gender equality worldwide. Those 12 critical areas of concern, which includes women and armed conflict, are outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) which, together with the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women, form the international legal and policy framework for the promotion of women's rights, the empowerment of women and gender equality.

This year marked the 25th anniversary of the BPfA. While the UN event in March 2020 was scaled down tremendously due to the COVID-19 pandemic, delegations came together for a day-long meeting to acknowledge that despite some significant gains, there are still too many gaps that remain. The result of the meeting was a political declaration reiterating their commitment to the BPfA principles and accelerating actions to achieve gender equality.

Click [here](#) to find out more!

I advise Clare and her team on the best course of action from a Private Office point of view. And I am trying to make sure all our decisions are made with a gender angle in mind.

The best and most recent example is how the Secretary General decided on the group he established to support his work on the Reflection Process to strengthen NATO's political dimension. He made clear, from the beginning of the discussions, that he will be seeking gender balance in the group, not only geographic representation. And he delivered by composing a group of five women and five men, representing a range of different Allies.

*"I want to see gender moved out of the opening commitments and be part of the operative paragraphs of Treaties and Agreements."*

It's important to keep gender in mind when making any and all decisions; what will be the impact on men and women? We also do a lot of background work, like lobbying Allies for the adoption of a robust Policy on Preventing and Combatting Sexual Exploitation and Abuse last year.

**What are the main challenges you've seen with integrating gender into your work? Care to share a frustrating or inspiring moment?**

**Camille:** We all know that driving forward the gender discussion faces many challenges. For me, the biggest challenge I see is around how to fundamentally change perspectives. For too many people and organizations, the concept of gender integration is considered a minority issue and an afterthought, rather than an issue that helps framing the right answer. Once we 'break the code' on that problem I think we will be in a much better place!

On an inspiring note, I would mention the fact that staffs, even those who started as skeptics, have quickly embraced the value of integrating a gender perspective in their work and demonstrated an incredible readiness to adapt and promote change.

**Diana:** The main challenge that I see is that gender integration in technology is a new area. Only at present, we are starting to discuss the gender biases potentially embedded in Artificial Intelligence development and the impact of Big Data/Machine Learning on women, among other issues. There is still a lot to understand and research in this area but certainly, it is an area that needs to be looked at. The frustration has, in particular, concerned wider leadership support and the lack of awareness about WPS and why this is important to us among some staff, managers and leaders.

During this journey, we shared a lot of inspiring moments, especially when we had the pleasure to hold an event with the former NATO Deputy Secretary General, Ms Rose Gottemoeller, who gave a very inspiring talk on the integration of gender in tech.

*“In 2019, we have implemented several projects to advance the WPS Agenda, from beginning engaging with schools to talk to girls about STEM subjects, to regular high-level breakfast discussions to share best practices and lessons learned in this area with other International Organizations, the private sector and academia.”*

**William:** In 2000, the NATO-led Stabilization Forces (SFOR), and later EUFOR, started carrying out Harvest Operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These operations included weapons collection media campaigns to encourage people to collect and hand in illegal weapons in the area. However, the media campaigns were mostly designed to target men, and many did not want to hand in their weapons as they commonly viewed weapons as a means of protection for their family. The campaigns were later redirected and designed to also target women, informing them about the risks of illegal weapons in the home, particularly towards children. This resulted in many more illegal weapons being collected and destroyed.

## Did you know?

NATO gender advisors have been around for a while. We adopted our first policy on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 – which formally established the Women, Peace and Security Agenda – in 2007. Soon after, NATO's Military Authorities developed a directive (Bi-SC Directive 40-1) on integrating gender perspectives in the NATO Command Structure, including through the introduction of qualified and trained gender advisors.

In 2009, NATO's first gender advisors were posted to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan, Allied Command Transformation (ACT) in Norfolk, Virginia and Allied Command Operations (ACO) in Mons, Belgium. Since then, full time or part time gender advisory roles have been established across many of NATO's commands and all of its operations and missions

Read more about this subject on page 7!

At the same time, this example reflects the main challenges we still face: the importance of the meaningful participation of women in policy and decision-making – in the early stages and not as an after-thought; the importance of collecting sex-disaggregated data to better comprehend the current situation in Arms Control, Disarmament, and WMD Non-Proliferation (ADN) and move away from anecdotal references; and the importance of systematic tracking of implementation and evaluation of progress made.

**Krisztian:** Maybe not a surprise, but the main challenge is the mindset, of all of us, me included. I am lucky to work in a team of highly qualified and skilled colleagues, my fellow Deputy Directors of the Private Office. We serve as sounding board for each other, on everything we work on. And on several occasions we have corrected each other on gender-related issues, prejudice and stereotypes. This has served me in my specific work very well but also in changing my own mindset.

A particularly inspiring moment was seeing the former Deputy Secretary General, Rose Gottemoeller, meet with a group of students in Georgia. One female student was shy, and so nervous that she could not finish her question to the DSG. Following the meeting I made sure she had her chance to ask her question, one on one, from Rose. And she also encouraged the student to never apologize for asking a question. I truly think she changed that student's outlook on life and what she can achieve for the better that day.

**How do you see the way forward? What would be some signs of the successful implementation of the WPS agenda in your area of work in 5 years?**

**Camille:** First, I am personally very reassured that NATO is taking this seriously. The Allies and the Secretary General's strong support, reinforced by practical actions, in driving the WPS agenda is a sign and cause for optimism. But looking around the organization we all need to do more to align with this direction and keep up the pressure for change. If I were to wake up tomorrow in 2025 I would hope to see a number of changes in capability development. First and most obviously, success to me would be underpinned by more women both in leadership positions in Defence Investment and at the table in the DI-supported committees. And not just women, but women from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds. The current ratio of women to men in DI committees is strikingly below what we can hope for; we need to work together to change this. In five years, I would be looking forward to attending another successful NATO Industry Forum with a broad representation of genders and definitely no MANELs! Finally, success to me would also mean upfront integration of gender policies in all our capability development, not seen as an afterthought or additional bureaucratic hurdle, but genuinely integrated.

*“One female student was shy,  
and so nervous that she could not finish  
her question to the DSG.  
Following the meeting I made sure  
she had her chance to ask her question,  
one on one, from Rose.”*

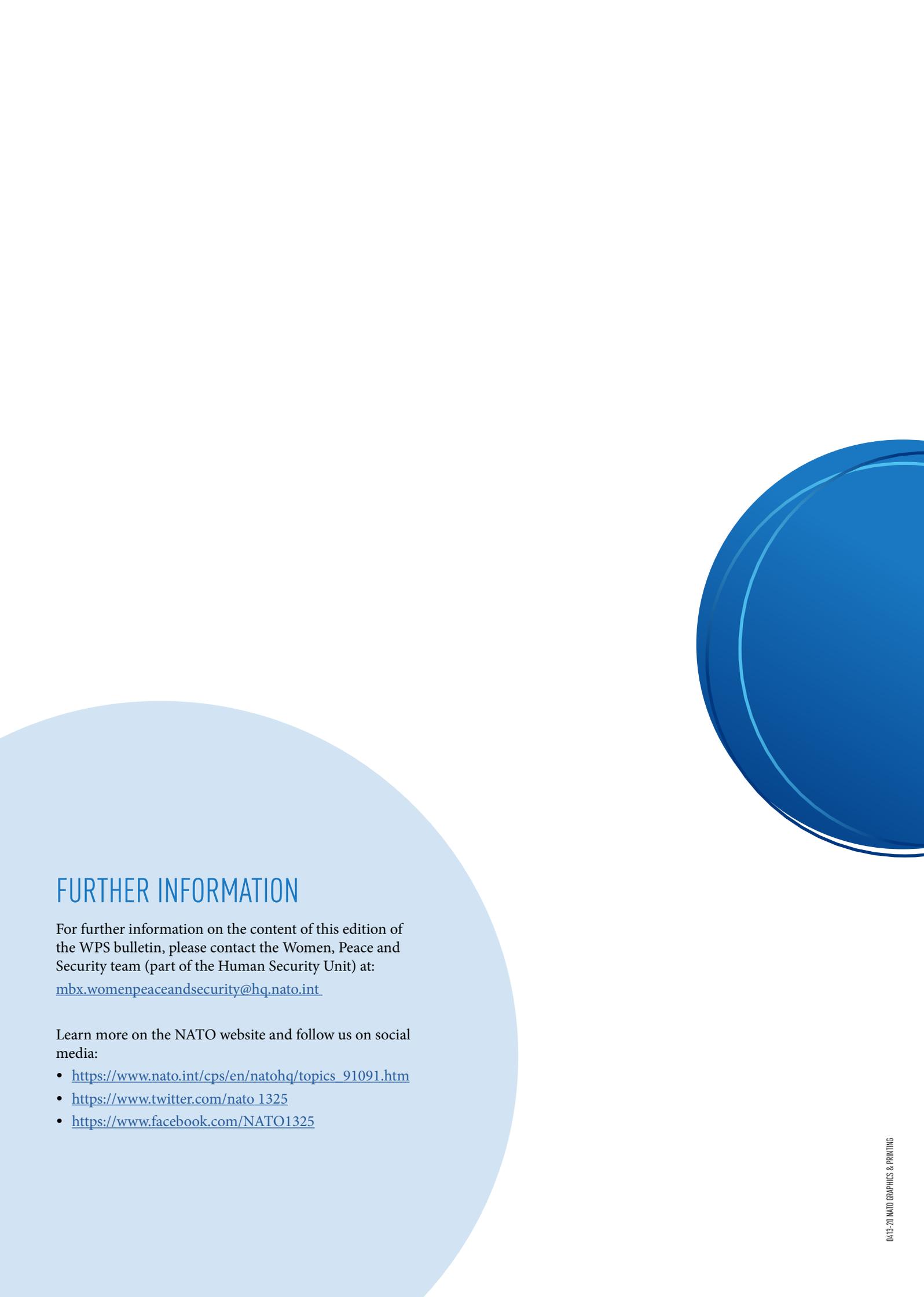
**Diana:** My dream come true would be that the percentage of women in tech substantially increases. We need women to be looking at those issues, and we need women's issues to be integrated in the development of new technologies. Today, the percentage of women in cyber is still 11%. There is a lot more work to be done in this area. My second dream come true would be to bridge security and development through technology and use technology to empower women and girls in the developing world. I would love to see leading tech companies to be more involved in capacity building and development work in the future, such as teaching girls in Africa how to code.

**William:** We have established tools, mechanisms and an impressive network of partners to further strengthen gender in all aspects of our work, and this is rather large in relation to ADN. So in my area, I want to see strengthening of our commitment to integrate more women throughout the ADN aspects. I want to see gender as a core element in our contribution to ADN – I want to see a focused efforts to raise awareness of gender and ADN, through training, development of security cadres and the development and implementation of standards. A lot of course depends on national support, as several of these activities are implemented by nations. But I am confident that with a clear steer and leadership support we can turn perceptions around and make ADN a truly comprehensive community.

I want to see gender moved out of the preamble / opening commitments and be part of the operative paragraphs of Treaties and Agreements. Diversity and differing perspectives enrich deliberations. I want to see a conscious and genuine commitment to improving women's engagement and participation in the work on ADN. It is a common-sense approach that will result in more inclusive, positive and representative views and efforts.

**Krisztian:** A true success would be having all the policies related to Women, Peace and Security adopted, and still to come, fully implemented, funded and understood by all as part of NATO's core business. And I think we are headed that way. I would also think it a success if in five years we would consider gender just as important a consideration when making decisions, delivering analysis and assessments as we do financial and media implications. For all this to happen I can only stress again the importance of changing mindsets, making gender a constituent part of our considerations on all issues we deal with, all decisions we make.

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## FURTHER INFORMATION

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