



Kosova Women's Network
Serving, Protecting and Promoting the Rights of Women and Girls

SECOND EDITION

1325

Facts & Fables

A collection of stories about the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security in Kosovo

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Kosovo Women's Network
Pristina, Kosovo
2022

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ACRONYMS

AAK	Alliance for the Future of Kosovo
AGE	Agency for Gender Equality
BIRN	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network
CCK	Criminal Code of Kosovo
CDF	Community Development Fund
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CIVPOL	UN Civilian Police
CSDP	European Common Security and Defence Policy
CSO	Civil society organisations
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
EC	European Commission
EEAS	European External Action Service
EU	European Union
EULEX	European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo
EUSR	European Union Special Representative in Kosovo
GENAD	Office of the Gender Advisor (KFOR)
HRGO	Human Rights and Gender Office (EULEX)
IAWP	International Association of Women in the Police
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICO	International Civilian Office
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
KFOR	Kosovo Force (NATO)
KGSC	Kosovo Gender Studies Centre

KIPRED	Kosovar Institute for Policy, Research and Development
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps
KPS	Kosovo Police Service
KRCT	Kosovo Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims
KSF	Kosovo Security Force
KWI	Kosovo Women's Initiative
KWN	Kosovo Women's Network
LDK	Democratic League of Kosovo
LMT	Liaison Monitoring Team
MP	Member of Parliament
MWAHR	Mitrovica Women's Association for Human Rights
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
OGA	Office of Gender Affairs (UNMIK)
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
OPDMK	Organisation for Persons with Muscular Dystrophy of Kosovo
OSCE	Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe
PDK	Democratic Party of Kosovo
RROGRAEK	Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Women's Network
RTK	Radio Television of Kosovo
RWL	Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security and Justice in South East Europe
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SGG	Security Gender Group
SOK	Statistical Office of Kosovo (later Kosovo Agency of Statistics)
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary-General
UN	United Nations

UN Women	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNMIK	United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
VWS	Victims and Witnesses Section (ICTY)
WHO	World Health Organisation

INTRODUCTION

What's the story?

"I want this publication to be seen not as a report, but more like something that makes you smile and say, 'How can that happen?' And I want to bring attention to the fact that 1325 is important, not just its sister resolutions."

– Igballe [Igo] Rogova, Executive Director,
Kosovo Women's Network, 2011

"There is always a risk of backlash after war, and I think women were frustrated as well. I remember Igo told me that she would never ever go to another 1325 conference again; she had enough of that. So I think there was also some tiredness or frustration. But I hope that it has passed. It was a time of big expectations and then perhaps things did not go as well as people had hoped."

– Sirpa Rautio, former Head of Human Rights and
Gender Office, European Union Rule of
Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX), 2011

"I'm sick of reports," Igballe (Igo) Rogova told a group of young women crowded around a wooden picnic table in Pristina. "Just like I tell people: I'm sick of conferences on 1325 too." As Executive Director of the Kosovo Women's Network (KWN), she had spoken at dozens of conferences in Brussels, Vienna, and Stockholm about United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security. This Resolution affirms the important role of women in preventing and resolving conflict, peace negotiations, peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, and reconstruction. It calls for

women's equal participation in all efforts to further peace and security.

"I'll never go to another conference. You know why? Because it's just words. You talk and talk and these high-level people pretend to listen, but then they don't take any action. Then you go to another conference on the same topic two months later and say the same things again. I'm sick and tired of talking to people who don't listen. I want to see some action." The women nodded sympathetically, and everyone took a sip of Peja beer. It was summertime in 2011, and they had gathered to discuss writing a report on the implementation of Resolution 1325 over the last ten years in Kosovo.

Perplexed, one woman asked, "Why do you want to work on this report now?"

"I want it to be seen not as a report," Rogova said, "but more like something that makes you smile and say, 'How can that happen?' And I want to remind people that 1325 is important, not just its sister resolutions."¹

The five researchers set off to collect stories from UN bodies, military forces, Kosovar institutions, and activists. In an interview, Nazlie Bala, women's rights activist, clearly summarised the questions they sought to answer: "We've used 1325 since 1999, even before such a Resolution existed," she said, "and how much it has been implemented by those who have the responsibility is a question that needs to be answered. It was started by the UN Mission, and how much implementation was done? We don't know. The other UN agencies all have it in their documents, but how much is it used? We don't know."

Researchers knew from experience that breaking the somewhat elusive Resolution into measurable actions was no easy task. However, their load had been lightened: the UN Secretary General's proposed indicators for measuring Resolution 1325 could now serve as their guide.² With these indicators in hand, they entered offices and bars, drank coffees and wine, wrote emails and emails and more emails, requesting

information from various institutions. Their efforts eventually culminated in the first edition of this book.

Nearly a decade later, on a chilly March morning, Rogova reflected on the forthcoming 20th Anniversary of Resolution 1325. "Many things have happened in the last 10 years," she said. "There are still stories to tell... We need to praise those who really did something and identify those areas that still need improvement." Another team of researchers set out into the field. Little did they know, only days after the research began, that the COVID-19 pandemic would redefine our everyday lives and their approach to this research. Nevertheless, with masks and online mediums, they managed to interview 36 institutions, organisations, and activists in 2020, asking each to reflect on the changes that have occurred in the last decade towards implementing Resolution 1325.

This publication reflects on the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Kosovo from its adoption in 2000 to 2020, based on the stories heard and data collected by the two research teams. Following the 1999 war, Kosovo was among the first places in the world where the then new Resolution offered significant opportunities for implementation, and we felt that Kosovo's 20-year experience with the Resolution could hold relevance for other conflict and post-conflict situations.

This publication includes "facts": statistics, dates, names, places, and issues surrounding the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Kosovo. It also includes "fables," that is, "a narration intended to enforce a useful truth," as Merriam Webster puts it.³ Thus, while we do not claim that all stories presented here are factual, we do believe that they are crucial in illustrating how people perceive the implementation of the Resolution. Where stories are contradictory, they may shed light on misunderstandings and miscommunication that slow cooperation and progress towards the Resolution's implementation.

While the Secretary-General's indicators were useful for guiding our research, when we began writing they quickly constrained us. They obscured cross cutting themes and stifled

the thick description arising from our interviews. Stories did not seem to fit within the indicators but burst beyond indicators' seams. Prevention of domestic violence required legal protection, but also economic independence, women's greater participation in police, and training for police and judges, for example. Thus, our findings related to the UN Secretary-General's indicators are woven throughout the chapters rather than arranged in neat little categories. In case you miss each fable's lesson, findings are summarised in Annex 1.

This introductory chapter includes an explanation of Resolution 1325, as well as research participants' understandings of the Resolution. It also presents the key actors in post-conflict Kosovo. The first section of the book focuses on women's participation in international organisations; negotiations; Kosovo politics; and other public institutions like the Kosovo Police and security forces. The second section weaves together the Secretary-General's "pillars" of prevention, protection, and relief and recovery in chapters that focus on safeguarding women's security. These deal with insecurities emphasised by research participants, but also identified in prior research: war-time sexual violence; preventing further conflict; trafficking; domestic violence; and human security more broadly. In the conclusion, we summarise key findings on the extent to which Resolution 1325 has been implemented; factors contributing to or hindering its implementation; and suggested actions moving forward.

“Lack of teeth”, but...

"Security Council resolutions are often very brief and very broad. It's quite challenging to interpret them concretely, and this one is no exception."

- Luciano Calestini, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 2011

"Nothing is articulated in 1325. It is just dust in your eyes. They're misty words, checkmate words, and nothing else."

- Sevdije Ahmeti, women's rights activist, 2011

We asked, "What does Resolution 1325 mean to you?"

While some research participants clearly understood key aspects of the Resolution in 2011, others seemed confused. Two participants had never heard of it. "To be frank, I don't have much knowledge," a representative of a Kosovo institution said. "I know that it is related to the protection of women's rights, but nothing more." Some thought they knew, but clearly did not. "It's a law that has not been implemented in Kosovo. The report exists, but it hasn't been discussed in public," a women's rights activist said. Others shuffled through their papers, became visibly flustered, or were annoyed that we didn't send this question in advance.

Back then, we had to gently explain: UN Security Council Resolution 1325 is not a law. Nor is it a report. It has, however, been the subject of conferences, reports, and media attention.

A decade later, it was our turn to become flustered; we had to be careful in how we phrased this question so as not to embarrass ourselves before the research participants, who now

tended to have a vast knowledge, awareness, and experience with the Resolution.

As Osnat Lubrani, the prior United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Resident Representative in Kosovo explained:

Resolution 1325 is very broad, addressing multiple actors, including the United Nations, but also UN member states. 1325 is a landmark Resolution in introducing women's concerns and perspectives before the Security Council and setting the core principles for addressing these ... Resolution 1325 calls for strengthening women's role in shaping conflict prevention and peace processes, but also generally in governance. While some measures have been taken to increase women's representation in decision-making, when it comes to peace and security matters, too often women are still absent from tables where decisions are being taken. ... In past years, four supporting resolutions were adopted by the Security Council, 1820, 1888, 1889, and 1960, that tackle specific areas raised in Resolution 1325, particularly in order to address sexual violence targeted at women and girls in conflict-related settings. These resolutions call for the establishment of global indicators and monitoring systems, analysis, and reporting arrangements to ensure that vigorous action is taken to better protect women from violence and bring an end to impunity.⁴

Twenty years after the Resolution's adoption, it remained equally pertinent, research participants tended to agree.

Central to Resolution 1325 is the concept of gender mainstreaming, which the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) defined as:

[A] strategy for making women's as well as men's concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programs in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal is to achieve gender equality.⁵

Alluding to the notion of gender mainstreaming, Nazlie Bala, then of UNDP, said, "1325 for me means women's empowerment at different levels: security, gender equality, and economic empowerment."⁶ Gender advisors know well that the Resolution requires women's participation and inclusion as decision-makers. At the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Kosovo Force (KFOR), Elisabeth Schleicher said that "women and girls must not be viewed only as victims but as active participants at all levels and sectors of society."⁷ Ten years later, KFOR representatives elaborated on their approach to gender-mainstreaming:

A gender perspective for us at KFOR is recognising if and when an operation will affect men and women, boys and girls differently due to the different roles they have in society. In other words, implementing a gender perspective means that, with every operation KFOR does, we ask ourselves the question: How does this affect men, women, boys and girls?⁸

Back in 2010, perhaps the greatest confusion we encountered was over whether the Resolution was a firm requirement or simply "a guide." Being a UN resolution, it has vague language that contributes to this confusion. Even worse, for a document about women, it is expressed in a gendered language. "How lovely, you want to 'urge' and 'encourage'," said the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) former gender advisor Clare Hutchinson:

When we do training I always say, "Read this. Is there anything in it that strikes you?" The whole document "encourages the Secretary-General to do *his* work" in terms of "his." I'm like, "There'll never be a woman secretary-general?" ... It's a misogynistic language coming out of the document that is supposed to do something different." The message is, "We know that you are all women and you will all feel very comfortable sitting around a table holding hands, and we encourage it." The language is of a softer nature, so the interpretation is of a softer nature. The Resolution won't necessarily be taken with the respect that it needs. I feel that's an obstacle.⁹

Rogova echoed these concerns, "For really implementing 1325, it needed to be stricter: not just to say, 'We urge countries'. [I]t has to be obligatory... To 'urge' means nothing, to be honest." As Resolution 1325 is not a convention, research participants recurrently observed that the Resolution "lacks teeth", that is, enforceability. While scholars have debated whether Resolution 1325 is legally binding,¹⁰ they tend to agree that verbs such as "urges", "welcomes", and "calls upon" do not represent a legally binding status.¹¹

But... and here's the big "but", we can say 10 years later, that Resolution 1325 still has managed to "urge" along some positive changes, which we discuss later.

Some people have always believed in the spirit of the Resolution to inspire change. Reyes Charle Cuellar, Gender Adviser to the European Union Special Representative (EUSR) in Kosovo, considered it the "resolution concerning gender equality that we were all waiting for":

To me it meant a big achievement. Laws in general, and in this case the Resolution, do not always necessarily reflect a reality already existing. I do believe in the power that the Resolution might have in societies and how these can trigger changes and put

on paper things that were obvious, but not everybody knew. It was clear that there was a consensus in the Resolution. It meant a very good opportunity for changing mentalities all over the world. It has proven relevant both in conflict and post-conflict societies, in any peace or reconciliation processes.¹²

Indeed, women's rights activists, as well as some actors in international bodies and Kosovo institutions, have grabbed hold of the opportunities provided by the toothless Resolution, utilising it to raise awareness and advocate for the importance of involving women and furthering gender equality in conflict and post-conflict societies like Kosovo.

“It was a big, messy mission in the beginning...”

“The starting point of course was that EULEX came and UNMIK didn’t leave. The planning presumptions fell apart. So in the beginning it was just messy. It was very big, with very fragmented structures, with large but separate components, and with a complicated mandate.

Then it became clear that there was very little guidance. The EU is a new actor in the field of peacebuilding, so it did not have a lot of institutional memory to draw on. So first it was the realisation that actually people do not really even know how to work, or there are no clear priorities set or guidance, particularly on the monitoring side, especially police. They didn’t really know what they were supposed to do. Police need very clear guidance, and there certainly wasn’t anything on gender issues and little on human rights to start with.

– Sirpa Rautio, former Head of Human Rights and Gender Office, EULEX, 2011

A cacophony of actors, interests, and agendas have called Kosovo home since the end of the war. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) was established in 1999 under Security Council Resolution 1244 with an open-ended mandate to govern Kosovo until its political status could be decided. With time, UNMIK shrank in size, particularly as competencies were handed over first to Kosovo’s Provisional Self-Government, and then to the Government of

the Republic of Kosovo, following the declaration of independence in February 2008.

Since 2000, UNMIK and international actors serving under it have had the responsibility to implement Resolution 1325. These actors include the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), responsible for “democratisation and institution-building” immediately after the war, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), tasked with humanitarian assistance. According to Frode Mouring, the former Head of UNDP, the whole UN-led international administration has a duty to implement the Resolution.¹³ As a duty-bearer for Kosovo, the UN’s role and obligation are to ensure that international agreements are respected. Unfortunately, Mouring said in 2007, “not everybody has seen it the same way.”

Since the declaration of independence, responsibility for implementing the Resolution also has rested on Kosovo’s institutions. If there was confusion before, the matter of who held responsibility for implementing Resolution 1325 became even foggier. Although other UN conventions and resolutions such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) became law, the Kosovo Assembly has never adopted 1325 explicitly into its national laws. Lacking recognition by two key members of the Security Council, Russia and China, Kosovo still has not obtained UN membership, and thus cannot be held formally accountable for the adoption of UN documents.¹⁴ Even so, representatives of Kosovar institutions and women’s rights activists alike seem to agree that Kosovo as a post-conflict country seeking to join the UN should implement the Resolution. As UNDP representatives indicated:

Although Kosovo is not yet a member of the United Nations, it is determined to meet the obligations arising from the Resolution, both in the form of inclusion and adoption in domestic legislation and the

implementation of international laws on human rights.¹⁵

While Kosovo still needs to formally adopt the Resolution within national law, several aspects of the Resolution are addressed through the Kosovo Law on Gender Equality, including gender equality and women's equal participation.¹⁶ All Kosovo institutions were obliged to apply this law, including security forces, Hysni Shala from the Kosovo Police observed: "Since 2010, we didn't need to compile any strategy within the Kosovo Police [related to 1325] because we were obliged to implement the policies at the national level."

Additionally, Kosovo had a National Action Plan on the implementation of 1325 for 2013-2015, heralded as exemplary in the region.¹⁷ An estimated 79 percent of the Plan was implemented, making it among the most implemented plans in Kosovo.¹⁸ After its expiry and a five-year hiatus, the Kosovo Program on Gender Equality 2020-2024 included aspects of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.¹⁹ The Kosovo Police and Kosovo Security Force (KSF), supported by UN Women and women's rights organisations, also established internal policies directly related to Resolution 1325. KSF adopted two policies on Human Rights and Gender Equality, in 2011 and 2019, both of which call for equal participation in decision-making positions within KSF as per Resolution 1325.²⁰

Meanwhile, Kosovo institutions are not exactly alone in the complicated system of governance established since 2008; independence was obtained under a negotiated agreement with the major western powers on the condition of further international supervision. A European Union Rule of Law Mission, EULEX, entered Kosovo in February 2008 to "monitor, mentor, and advise" the Kosovo authorities in establishing the rule of law, focusing on police, judiciary, and customs. The few executive powers that EULEX retained dealt with the ability to investigate and prosecute serious and sensitive crimes, such as war crimes, trafficking, terrorism, corruption, and serious financial crimes.²¹ Remaining status neutral, EULEX has

functioned within the framework of the 1999 UN Resolution 1244, looking to the EU in Brussels for directions. Until 2012, an International Civilian Office (ICO) presided on the protection of minorities and decentralisation, under the guidance of a 25-country steering committee.

The “messy beginning” of EULEX, highlighted by Gender Advisor Sirpa Rautio, was probably inevitable, given the complexity of Kosovo’s system of governance. Equally inevitable was the confusion on what exactly EULEX’s mandate was in terms of implementing Resolution 1325. Notably, the Council of the European Union has called for implementation of Resolution 1325 in the context of the European Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP).²² With EULEX being the largest CSDP Mission ever deployed, their mandate has assumed responsibility for implementing Resolution 1325. Less specifically, EULEX has been tasked with “ensuring that all its activities respect international standards concerning human rights and gender mainstreaming.”²³

At the same time, the European Union’s (EU) presence and influence has grown in Kosovo over the last decade, particularly amid Kosovo’s expressed desires to join the EU. The EU’s commitments to implementing Resolution 1325 through its external relations, political dialogue, and external financing have matured with time. In 2008, the EU adopted its “Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security”. Then, in 2018, the EU approved the EU Strategic Approach to Women, Peace, and Security. Moreover, the EU’s gender action plans and Strategy for Gender Equality have included commitments to the women, peace and security agenda, all applicable to the EU and its member state’s engagement in Kosovo.²⁴

Resolution 1325 also calls for institutions responsible for security in Kosovo to implement its provisions. Initially, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) took responsibility for ensuring security, and 45,000 troops from around the world landed in Kosovo in 1999 as part of the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

UNMIK installed the UN civilian police (CIVPOL), also known as the UNMIK police. The UNMIK Department of Justice and CIVPOL led joint efforts for "police and justice". They later involved the newly trained local Kosovo Police Service (KPS) that became the independent Kosovo Police via a process that began in 2001 and culminated with the establishment of the Ministry of Internal Affairs in 2006.²⁵ The Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) was disarmed and transitioned into the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), a civilian organisation. Eventually part of this agency joined the Kosovo Security Force (KSF), established officially on 14 June 2009. Later, the Ministry of the Kosovo Security Force was reorganised into the Ministry of Defense in 2014.

In 2010, the UN Secretary-General formulated a comprehensive plan that established indicators for monitoring the implementation of Resolution 1325; it specifies responsibilities and indicators of progress. The indicators give the following actors a responsibility to implement the Resolution: The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) in New York, UN representatives, UNMIK, other UN agencies, the OSCE, the Government of Kosovo, Kosovo Police, KSF, EU, EULEX, ICO, and KFOR. The indicators are a necessary clarification, because without clear guidelines, the implementation of Resolution 1325 had remained hostage to local practices and political will. The plethora of actors at play in Kosovo meant that the ball of implementing Resolution 1325 sometimes was dropped or tossed to a willing or unwilling other.

PARTICIPATION

"After the war there was the tendency of marginalising women from politics despite the fact that in Kosovo women were highly involved in the process of liberation, independence, and democracy."

– Edita Tahiri, former Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs and National Security, 2011

"Now, after 10 years in independent Kosovo, we [Kosovo women] expected to receive public acceptance and ownership for our contribution to state-building, [to have] better access to justice, like the other half of society, men. [Instead,] we faced total ignorance and denial by all post-war governments. Ironically, we were replaced by representatives of international organisations and local government institutions that acquisitioned our results."

– Shukrije Gashi, Executive Director, Partners Kosova, 2011

Grey clouds covered the sky in Pristina on 8 March 1998, International Women's Day. The dreary weather didn't dampen the determined spirit of the 15,000 women who had gathered before the United States Information Office. There was a constant buzz as murmuring women held blank, white papers aloft, symbolising the absence of human rights in Kosovo. Through this visual spectacle, they sought to peacefully draw international attention to the violence unleashed by the Milošević regime against civilians in the rural region of Drenica, fewer than 50 kilometres from Pristina.¹

Demonstrations continued over the weeks that followed. Five days later an impressive crowd of roughly 50,000 gathered, demanding an end to the Serbian blockade of

Drenica, where no humanitarian aid had been able to reach thousands of displaced and wounded people for weeks.

Another demonstration, organised by women's groups and the Women's Forum of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), brought together 12,000 women on 16 March 1998. Women marched from Pristina to Drenica in their effort to bring "Bread for Drenica." Clutching loaves of bread, the lengthy line of women walked in silence until they reached the town of Fushe Kosova, just outside Pristina. Serbian police prevented them from marching farther, threatening to intervene if they proceeded. Seeking to maintain peace, the procession of women eventually turned, gathering momentum until they arrived at the International Red Cross office in Pristina. There, they somberly laid thousands of loaves of bread in a symbolic gesture.

The crowd then made its way towards the UNHCR office. Again, women were thwarted by the Serbian police from reaching their destination. As they stood in front of the Serbian cordon, they began to chant, ever so softly at first, "Bread for Drenica." Their chant grew increasingly louder, "Bread for Drenica!" The words swelled and became a forceful chant. Here were thousands of women speaking out, protesting, and actively participating in activities seeking an end to the violations of women's and citizens' rights perpetrated by Serbian military and police.

"Women were, I would say, a vital part of the movement for independence, at that time led by the LDK," Edita Tahiri recalled, twelve years later. Sitting in her new office as Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs and National Security, we listened as her thoughts drifted back in time. In the 1990s, women had participated actively in the Kosovar Albanian civil resistance against Serbia's oppressive and discriminatory policies and as members of the armed resistance mounted by the KLA. Women played leading roles in inter-ethnic human rights organisations spanning Kosovo and Serbia, calling for an end to war, rape, and killings.

“Women were in politics, diplomacy, negotiation, and the battlefield,” Tahiri said. “So given this important role in ... making the nation free from Serbian occupation, which lasted almost ten years, it was normally expected that after the war women would be supported in their role in politics.”

It did not happen. As is often the case after wars, women were pushed from the centre to the margins. Sirpa Rautio saw this transition over time:

Just when the war was breaking, I was in Drenica when the first killings happened. I was working for the UN Office for the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Sarajevo and was temporarily deployed to help colleagues working in Serbia and Kosovo as the human rights situation and security conditions worsened. I worked with the Mother Teresa Society. The place was really tense, but Kosovo women were driving everything. I don't remember men involved in anything that we did ... whatever it was, it was women. And they were incredible women. So, I was a bit shocked when I came back ten years later and saw that women seemed to be pushed farther to the margins. In some ways in 1998 women were more systematically involved.²

The ostracization of women from politics and decision-making processes immediately after the war would have implications for women's participation in the decades that followed, as this section discusses.³

“FROM DAY ONE WE STARTED USING THE RESOLUTION...”

"In this country very little is known about this Resolution. It is widely unknown, even to UNMIK personnel. Not even gender specialists who worked for UNMIK promoted it. If a great mission like this does not engage in the promotion of one of their own resolutions, it represents a great loss."

- Luljeta Vuniqi, former Executive Director,
Kosovo Gender Studies Centre, 2011

On 10 June 1999, the UN Security Council approved Resolution 1244,⁴ which, along with the Military Technical Agreement between the International Security Force (KFOR) and the governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia,⁵ may be considered a peace “agreement”. Both documents ended and “significantly” transformed “a violent conflict so that it” could be “addressed more constructively”, as per the UN Secretary-General’s indicators.⁶ Resolution 1244 did not resolve the conflict between Kosovo and Serbia, leaving this to be discussed later. It suspended Serbia’s sovereignty over Kosovo and granted unmitigated power to an UN-led international administration to govern the former Serbian autonomous province until its final political status could be decided. Although Resolution 1244 did not include “specific provisions to improve the security and

status of women and girls”,⁷ women leaders rejoiced that the UN would govern Kosovo temporarily.

“We greeted joyfully the decision that put Kosovo under a UN administration”, Igballe Rogova recalled.⁸ “The UN was to us the revered international organisation which developed and passed key documents that stipulated women’s rights and promoted their integration at all levels of decision-making.” Women’s rights activists and politicians alike expected to gain added influence in decision-making processes with the entrance of the UN. After all, the UN had established such key documents as the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and fostered the adoption of the Beijing Fourth World Conference of Women Declaration and its Platform for Action of 1995.

“For me it was good that we were having internationals in Kosovo,” recalled Veprora Shehu, Director of Medica Kosova:

When the internationals came, I thought that they would not have the social attitudes and stereotypes we have here about women. I had a lot of hopes and expectations. There were achievements, but the hopes and expectations that I had really were not met.⁹

“I wish I was not so excited,” said Rogova. “From day one UNMIK didn’t want to communicate with women’s organisations. They didn’t want to communicate with women. Their structure was completely patriarchal. ‘Yes,’ they said, ‘we came to a patriarchal society, that’s why we are all men.’ I was shocked.”¹⁰

Kosovo society has its traditions, as does any. However, under the modernising influence of post-World War II socialist Yugoslavia, women had positions in government, industry, education, and health. During the Milošević regime, women emerged as leaders in the resistance movement. Homogenising Kosovo society as too patriarchal to have women leaders was ignorant of its rich history and patently wrong.

Rogova has plenty of stories that reveal how the international presence was unprepared to face Kosovo's post-war reality:

When we came back from being refugees, we had to push and push. The first UNMIK SRSG [Special Representative of the Secretary-General] Bernard Kouchner looked at women as objects.

In October 1999, the same year after the war, came Kofi Annan, then Secretary-General of the UN. Kofi Annan was planning a meeting with civil society. Guess what? There were no women invited because UNMIK and OSCE said they "had come to a patriarchal society."

But we had an ally: Lesley Abdela. Before she came to Kosovo, she learned about it. So, when she came to OSCE she went to a meeting with Hans Christian, the Director of the Department of Democratisation.

And Lesley said to him, "Where are the women?"

And Hans said, "Com'mon, you forgot that this is a patriarchal society."

She said, "I know there are women's organisations."

When she found out Kofi Annan was coming, she went to the OSCE Head of Mission Daan Everts and Kouchner and asked, "Why aren't there any women invited?"

They said, "The invitations have been sent, and there is no time to make changes."

Then she sent a fax to Kofi Annan, saying, "I know you care about gender, and this is the situation. There are no women invited to your meeting with Kosovo civil society."

He wrote back saying, "I want women to be there."

She wrote to women and said, "You have one minute each. Think of what you want to say. One minute each."

That day, when they saw three strong women come through the door, Sevdije Ahmeti, Vjosa Dobruna, and me, both Kouchner and Everts panicked.

Kouchner spoke first. You have no idea how long he spoke. And then Kofi Annan looked at him. God, I loved it. He said, "Shut up," with his eyes. Kouchner said, "Now the Secretary-General will say something."

Annan said, "No, no, no. I'm not here to speak. I'm here to listen."

Can you imagine?

Poor Kosovar men there. They were told they would only shake hands with Kofi Annan; they did not know they could speak. Annan said, "I'm here to listen. Who wants to speak?"

We raised our hands. Sevdije Ahmeti mentioned women's security and Vjosa Dobruna spoke about women's economic empowerment.

Then I asked, "Why are women not in the Transitional Council that assists in governing Kosovo until the elections?"

Annan said, "I promise you that in three weeks maximum there will be women there."

Afterwards, the men congratulated us. They said, "My God! You women are so organised!"

Do you know what happened next? The next day Lesley was fired. Okay, she was not fired officially, but she was "removed".¹¹

Lesley Abdela's contract was terminated because she had breached protocol by informing Kofi Annan that women had not been invited to meet him.

While they were frustrated by the UN's initial failure to include them in the Kosovo Transitional Council, among other

decisions, activists were encouraged by the passage of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security on 31 October 2000. The Resolution signalled an international commitment to ensuring women's participation in the peace process, as well as broader decision-making processes. Rogova recalled:

When the UN signed this Resolution, the friend we had in the Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, Maha Muna, sent us this information because we had been telling the Women's Commission what was happening in Kosovo: how they were ignoring women.

And she said, "Use it."

So, from day one, we started using the Resolution. We were writing letters to UNMIK, to the UN in New York even, saying, "You have to implement the Resolution."¹²

There is growing consensus on the importance of women's presence in decision-making positions within relevant regional peacekeeping and conflict prevention organisations. Women's participation may enable preventative diplomacy that considers the specific needs and issues of women and girls, according to the UN Secretary-General.¹³ What is a "regional organisation"? Now hang in here:

The [UN] Charter deliberately provides no precise definition of regional arrangements and agencies, thus allowing useful flexibility for undertaking by a group of states to deal with a matter appropriate for regional action which also could contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security.¹⁴

In all the leading regional organisations involved in conflict prevention, namely the EU, NATO, and OSCE, women's

representation has remained low, albeit with some improvements in the last decade, particularly at the EU (see Table 1).

Table 1. Number and Percentage of Women in Regional Organisations involved in Preventing Conflict

Regional Organisation	2011		2020	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
European Parliament	259 35%	477 65%	278 39.5%	426 60.5%
European Parliament Presidents (since 1952)	2 7.4%	25 93.6%	2 6.9%	27 93.1%
European Commission	2010-2014		2019-2024	
	9 33.3%	18 66.7%	12 46.2%	14 53.9%
NATO Secretary Generals (since 1988)	0 0%	12 100%	0 0%	12 100%
NATO Permanent Representatives	1 3.7%	26 97.3%	7 23.3%	23 76.7%
OSCE Secretaries General (since 1993)	0 0%	5 100%	1 14.3%	6 85.7%

“Even today we see more men than women [in the EU],” observed Vetone Veliu, Executive Director of the Mitrovica Women’s Association for Human Rights (MWAHR), who has been advocating in Brussels for this to change, together with other women’s rights activists from the region.¹⁵

Two women have held the position of High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy: Catherine Ashton and Federica Mogherini. This has not necessarily meant that they have advanced visibly Kosovo women’s priorities and needs. In 2013, KWN wrote a letter to Catherine Ashton stating that Resolution 1325 was not implemented during the talks between Kosovo and Serbia and that women’s rights organisations were not included.¹⁶ She

responded, acknowledging women's contributions to "normalizing relations in everyday life" and the EU's commitment to women's rights.¹⁷ Beyond such broad statements, little observable effort has been made to enforce Resolution 1325 in the EU-brokered talks between Kosovo and Serbia. "[These two women] have never ever mentioned rape as a crime that happened during the war," Feride Rushiti observed.¹⁸ Yllka Soba agreed: "Ashton and Mogherini, they are women, but they are just doing their job without any gender-sensitive approach. The way they handled the Dialogue was not any different from any man," she said.¹⁹ While the Dialogue agenda was set by Kosovo and Serbia governments, who also selected their representatives, some research participants felt that the EU could have done more to "urge" these governments to include women, as discussed later.

While women have held some executive positions in regional organisations, we found little substantial evidence that they had addressed issues of importance to women and girls in Kosovo in relation to conflict prevention. A noteworthy exception was Ulrike Lunacek, member of the European Parliament for Austria and European Parliament rapporteur for Kosovo from 2009 to 2017. On nearly every visit to Kosovo, she met with women's groups both formally and informally to hear their concerns. She took some issues raised by Kosovo women to the European Parliament. Her successor, Igor Soltes (2014-2018), reportedly never met women civil society leaders. However, Viola von Cramon who followed him (from 2019) took up the torch, meeting women leaders to hear and act on their concerns, providing EU support for enhancing women's engagement in politics via political dialogue with Kosovo leaders.

Other EU parliamentarians have consulted women's rights groups in Kosovo more often than in the prior decade, including on issues ranging from gender-based violence, gender-responsive budgeting in EU external financing, the gender perspective in Kosovo progress reports, and funding for women's rights groups. On 23 January 2019, the European

Parliament adopted a Resolution on Women's Rights in the Western Balkans, inclusive of several recommendations made by KWN, among other women's rights groups in the region.²⁰ Desk officers at the European Commission (EC) meet with activists regularly to discuss how best to integrate a gender perspective in the Kosovo annual progress report related to the EU Accession process, and which issues to raise with Kosovo Government counterparts during political dialogues. The EU's regional Civil Society Facility also has started earmarking funds for programs that seek to further gender equality, consulting with women's rights organisations regarding which issues require prioritising. These relationships and efforts have grown with time with the unwavering support of the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation,²¹ particularly via its annual advocacy week in Brussels that has supported Kosovo activists, among other activists in the region, in advocating for the EU to improve its attention to gender equality.

Thus, the EU has observably improved in its implementation of Resolution 1325 over time. Rogova reflected:

The EU has made a huge change, but it was because of the advocacy of women's rights organisations and [this includes the] Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, among others who advocated together with us for many years. I have been part of [this group], especially in Brussels, speaking the same language. At one point, I said, "I'm sick and tired. I don't want to go anymore". Because they were just saying things, but they didn't follow through. Since then, this huge change happened. It was not one moment; it was something slowly built. And, inside Brussels, people came to top positions who believed in this. Here, I want to mention Charlotte Isaksson, who came from NATO to work at the EU. She did an amazing job inside NATO for the implementation [of 1325]. Before coming to the EU, she was training NATO troops, and she is the reason

NATO has made so much progress implementing 1325. She started the movement on 1325 within NATO. So, the EU was joined by people who knew [the importance] of Resolution 1325.²²

While the EU may have been initially “slow” in its implementation of Resolution 1325, as one EU official admitted, it has since made a clear, concerted effort to improve. Efforts in the last decade have included passage of the aforementioned policies related to Resolution 1325 and increased, specialised human resources, most notably European External Action Service (EEAS) Ambassador and Principal Advisor on Gender Mara Marinaki, Gender Advisor at EEAS Charlotte Isaksson, and the team of gender experts at EEAS that now also includes Lina Andeer who came from Kvinna till Kvinna and served in Kosovo (you’ll recall her later). They meet regularly with women’s rights activists from Kosovo, and elsewhere, representing their interests and priorities to EU leadership and supporting their efforts.

Thus, a combination of internal policy commitments, enhanced political will, and improved human resource capacities coupled with an outside push from women’s rights activists and organisations seem to have contributed to improvements in the EU’s implementation of Resolution 1325 regarding women’s participation in decision-making.

Similar improvements could be observed in other regional security organisations. In Vienna, “the OSCE Secretariat developed a Gender Parity Strategy where there is a huge corpus of standards and minimum requests” related to implementing Resolution 1325, OSCE Gender Advisor Biljana Nastovska told us.²³

NATO has made several strides forward in the last decade. For the first time, in 2012, NATO created a specific position for promoting and implementing Resolution 1325: the Special Representative for Women, Peace and Security, held by the Norwegian Diplomat Mari Skåre.²⁴ Rogova recalled:

We women in the world pushed, not just for an action plan [on 1325], but we said: "You need a special office, a special person to push for implementation of this plan", because the commander of NATO will not say, "Ok, guys, are we implementing 1325?". So [NATO] founded this office. And this book, *1325 Facts and Fables*, changed the first Special Representative [Mari Skåre]. ... I remember UNIFEM had organised to meet ... in her office in Brussels when we were there meeting many institutions. [Other members of our delegation] were talking and talking ... about the Law on Gender Equality, police in Kosovo, and when it came to my turn, ... I could see this woman had no idea what she was doing there ... I said, "You know what? I'm not going to speak about anything because you just came to the office. I can see that you still need time to organise things, so I suggest I give you this book, and when you read this book, then we can communicate. Because what I was going to share is a small amount of what is in this book, so whenever you have time...". Her first visit after she became Special Representative on 1325 was to Kosovo. She told us: "I read the book in two hours, and I need to say, this was my passport for the position I have. This tells me clearly what my job should be as a Special Representative on 1325."²⁵

After that, Mari Skåre established an advisory group, as she realised from reading the first edition of *1325 Facts & Fables* that she needed to hear regularly from women's rights organisations. She invited Rogova and fourteen other activists from around the world to join the Civil Society Advisory Panel. On a voluntary basis, they supported NATO in developing an action plan for implementing Resolution 1325 throughout the world, which has been implemented, according to Rogova. "NATO really changed rapidly," she said:

And they have used Kosovo as an example, such as establishing gender advisors and consulting women's rights organisations. ... For me, it is a success story. Globally, Kosovo was taken as an example when discussing 1325, because of our *Facts and Fables*. I got many emails saying, "Wow, now I know how to fight for it in my country", after they read *Facts and Fables*. So, one book changed many things.

“Missions are still very much a male business”

"There were never any female heads of these [international organisations]. In 20 years, there has not been one female head of the UNMIK mission. In Mitrovica, it's just a bunch of men in charge. OSCE has a bunch of men. It's just a bunch of men talking to men, and they don't actually want to listen..."

- Tijana Simić LaValley, Zensko Pravo, 2020

Resolution 1325 also calls for “increased representation and meaningful participation of women in the United Nations and other international missions related to peace and security.”²⁶ “Women’s share of senior positions in United Nations field missions” can serve as a “proxy measure of the extent to which women’s needs and interests are addressed in high-level decision-making,” according to the UN Secretary-General. Despite this guidance, women have not been employed by international missions in Kosovo at the same rate as men. Nor have women occupied as many high-level decision-making positions (see Table 2).

Table 2. Women’s Share of Senior Positions in Missions to Kosovo

Position	2011		2020	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
UNMIK SRSGs	0 0%	9 100%	0 0%	10 100%
OSCE Heads	0 0%	5 100%	0 0%	8 100%

Position	2011		2020	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
EU Heads of Mission in Kosovo ²⁷	0 0%	4 100%	1 14.3%	6 85.7%
ICO Heads (ended in 2012)	0 0%	1 100%		
KFOR Commanders	0 0%	16 100%	0 0%	23 100%

“They actually didn’t implement it themselves,” said activist Ariana Qosaj Mustafa. “They had double standards. In all the years we had the UN mission, we never saw any woman being appointed SRSG and leading the mission in Kosovo.”²⁸ Indeed, out of ten SRSGs, none were women.

“They are very patriarchal and traditional,” said Flora Macula, then of UNIFEM, in 2007. “So, you will not find women within UNMIK structures. I’m talking about the senior positions. Never was there one woman in this kind of position within UNMIK, and how can you promote something when you are not showing the model first?”²⁹ “In terms of UNMIK itself, the record of women in decision-making is extremely poor,” agreed former UNMIK Gender Advisor Clare Hutchinson, “We don’t have women at the highest possible level.”³⁰

Despite the mission’s lip service to “1325,” EULEX initially repeated the same pattern of indifference to women’s participation. Although the EU mission committed to implementing Resolution 1325 and to particular procedural steps in terms of meeting with women twice per year, integrating a gender perspective in training and policies, and reporting on the implementation of Resolution 1325,³¹ the mission itself was, as Luljeta Vuniqi said, “male dominated.”³² In July 2011, women held roughly 23 percent of positions within the mission.³³ Most top positions were held by former military personnel. The fact that “people with a military-background are leading a civilian mission ... is nonsense,” Vuniqi said at the time. In 2011, a former EU official who wished to remain anonymous concurred:

EULEX was supposed to be a civilian mission and of course some staff were more civilian than others. But overall, I think that missions draw lots of ex-military persons to key positions, not only in police functions, but also in other functions. The security was, in my mind, hyped up so that the environment was definitely masculine. And you know these people don't think of gender. They don't take it seriously in most cases.

Then also the way that the mission had been planned; I think that human rights and gender were an afterthought. Even for those components where you would think that some expertise would have been hired, such as for police, it was only one person dealing with domestic violence out of 2,500 staff. It was clear that the issue was marginal.

You didn't have women. You didn't have experts hired for this topic, and overall, I think the attitude was that "Women are not our business." Even those sympathetic to gender issues felt it was for others, not for EULEX, which has other priorities. They would say, "Well it's very important, but the European Commission is dealing with these things." So, it was clearly not a priority. ... Missions are still very much a male business, despite a lot of efforts and 1325.

"From my perspective, which is mainly looking at EULEX and other international actors, the main challenge is still the marginalisation of women from decision-making and participation," said Sirpa Rautio in 2011, who once led the EULEX Human Rights and Gender Office. "I expected more from the EU."³⁴

All this started to change with the appointment of Alexandra Papadopoulou as Head of EULEX, from 2016 to 2019. She regularly consulted with women leaders in Kosovo and worked to address the various issues they brought

forward. According to Qosaj Mustafa, KWN Chair of the Board in 2020:

The former Head of EULEX, Ms. Papadopoulou, was very gender sensitive, so she was very able to consult with civil society. She would meet with us regularly, and she was very interested not to hear only the officials' perspectives. [To the] extent it was possible, [she also pushed forward] more gender sensitive policies... For example, rape: we had lots of cases of rape [during the war] in Kosovo, and I remember when we were looking at these issues a couple of years ago, especially in the first *Facts and Fables*, [addressing rape] was so poorly organised. EULEX did not have resources for that; [it] basically was not prepared logistically to handle it. It didn't have the expertise to handle these cases. It changed when she arrived. She pulled lots of resources [together]. She tried to have medical experts in forensics, law enforcement people specialised in these issues, [and] gender focal points within law enforcement. And they achieved many results.

Rogova agreed, speaking with admiration about Ms. Papadopoulou:

EULEX never did anything until a woman came into a high-level position. It was the first time to have a woman leading EULEX. Papadopoulou was not just a woman; she was a woman who was active! And she was meeting me on a regular basis to discuss things... what do we think about Mitrovica? What do we think about Dialogue [with Serbia]? What do we think about negotiations? She didn't sit with me and say: "Let's talk only about violence against women". That's the difference. So, she didn't talk only about "women's issues" as her fellow colleagues. She talked with me about all the topics that she discussed with other

leaders because she wanted to hear the perspectives of women's rights organisations, not just leaders. ... She left, and this guy [who replaced her] was totally out in outer space, and he was Swedish!! Imagine, this guy ... never cared to write to women's rights organisations to talk about issues that are not only "women's issues".³⁵

Ms. Papadopoulou demonstrated how having strong, committed women in leadership positions can push forward gender equality issues. The number of women in decision-making positions within EULEX also has grown exponentially with time, reaching more than 25 percent as of December 2020, though women remained underrepresented within the Mission.³⁶

Meanwhile, across town at the EU Office and EU Special Representative (EUSR) in Kosovo, there has been only one woman Ambassador, Natalia Apostolova. However, the percentage of women in other leadership positions within the mission has increased significantly over time, Gender Adviser Charle Cuellar reflected:

If you see the number in our own offices, including the fact that we have had a woman Head of Mission for four years, in our joint EU Office, we have more women than men ... also in managerial positions. We are implementing the Resolution.³⁷

Women's rights activists observed that an exemplary man ambassador, Ambassador Samuel Žbogar (2012-2017) sought to implement Resolution 1325 by regularly meeting with women's rights activists and politicians, hearing their priorities, and putting the EU's weight behind making their voices heard. He met more consistently with women's rights organisations and leaders regarding various political issues than did his successor, Ambassador Apostolova.

Other international missions have made little progress in increasing women's representation at the highest levels of decision-making, as Qosaj Mustafa summarised:

It has been difficult to push forward [women's participation in] decision-making within international organisations and multilateral organisations ... such as OSCE, EULEX, and other EU bodies and agencies working in Kosovo. UNMIK never had a special representative which was a woman.... EULEX as well. It took years to have Ms. Papadopoulou appointed as the Head, and I think it was also because of her really exquisite diplomatic connections and relations that she managed to get the job. Before that, we had one deputy in EULEX. We had recently EU Special Representative Natalia Apostolova. [But,] again, we are getting a man. ... If you look at different levels, at decision-making, especially decision-making, 1325 is definitely still far away from what has been promised.³⁸

Several obstacles exist, hindering women's involvement at senior levels in international missions. Reliance on member states to appoint women and Kosovo being a non-family duty station have contributed to women's limited representation. "We don't have women at the highest possible level," Hutchinson said, "because of the member states."³⁹ UN member states must recruit and send women to UN missions, but few have considered this a priority. Missions have minimal control over who is sent.

EULEX faced a similar issue in 2011. Although EULEX had staffing policies towards decreasing the gender imbalance within the mission, EU member states carried the responsibility to nominate women or men for EULEX when it came to seconded personnel. Thus, at the time, EULEX did not have "much room to manoeuvre when no women are nominated for certain positions."⁴⁰ Since then, the EULEX Human Resource Office has carried out several efforts to issue recommendations

and to uphold the principle of gender parity during the recruitment process, such as making job descriptions more attractive to women, prioritising interviewing qualified women, and including more women in the recruitment panel.⁴¹ Meanwhile, some decisions related to recruitment still lie with the authorities in Brussels.

Also, due to the volatility of the security situation, field missions have tended not to permit (or fund, where applicable) the relocation of families to Kosovo. Given women's tendency to serve as caregivers, as data across countries confirm, this affects disproportionately women's ability to work in missions. It is difficult to attract women to international missions when they are unable to relocate their families with them.

While important, having women in leadership positions is not necessarily sufficient for furthering gender equality within the work of international missions. A recurring theme among research participants was the importance of women and men working together towards gender equality. "If we really want to take UNSCR 1325 to another level, we will have to get men on board," said KFOR Gender Advisor Elisabeth Schleicher. "So it would make sense to have a Gender Team consisting not only of women but also of men."

Indeed, the example of men leaders, like Ambassador Žbogar, constantly meeting women and raising gender equality issues was identified as a best practice worthy of replication. This merely depends on the political will of men to prioritise implementing Resolution 1325 in their everyday work.

Gender advisors “landing” in Kosovo

"I like to think that we achieved something. Definitely we became more of a player. It was planned to be marginalised. I think that we managed to get out of that, and get to the strategic planning point, get to the processes, and, in doing so, get a bit more influence."

- Sirpa Rautio, Gender Advisor, 2011

"Very often, this is 'mission impossible'".

- Mission gender focal point, 2021

The presence of gender advisors at high level positions within missions could help ensure that women's needs and interests would be considered in decision-making processes.⁴² After the adoption of Resolution 1325, international organisations began appointing gender advisors, albeit at different decision-making levels. More such advisors have been appointed in the last decade.

"The Office of Gender Affairs (OGA) was the first of its kind among the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) missions," according to UNMIK's Philippe Tissot. "It was a sort of pilot project of the Gender Advisory Units, which most of the 15 DPKO missions today are equipped with." OGA was established in 1999, "as a political advisory unit on gender issues."⁴³ OGA existed within UNMIK through 2008, and gender focal points remained within the mission afterward. OGA's mandate involved implementing gender mainstreaming within UNMIK, that is, making sure that gender perspectives and equality are central to all activities. It was charged with

coordinating efforts towards gender equality among and within UNMIK; offering opportunities for women's organisations to have a greater role in decision-making processes; promoting minority women's interests; and strengthening government capacity to handle issues with an impact on women. Indeed, it was a tall order. In its early days, the office functioned within the civil administration.

"I don't think we have been effective at all, due to the very nature of how the office was set up," said Hutchinson back in 2007:

I think there were problems from the very beginning ... in terms of the leadership of the office. ... I think the last SRSG [Holkeri] and this SRSG [Jessen-Petersen] were very open to include gender, but before that I don't think that there was any movement that went forward. ... The office was placed under the civil administration, pillar 2, and wasn't placed at the SRSG's office. I'll be very frank; the only reason it was moved was because the last chief of the office, Maddalena Pizzotti, pushed very hard to get it placed in the SRSG's office. She was right; it should have been in the SRSG's office. We're not an advisor to the civil administration. We're an advisor to the mission, and it was moved ... due to the commitment of the last SRSG.⁴⁴

When SRSG Søren Jessen-Peterson moved the office, Vunigi said, he "really gave them the support and the power to do their job, which was not the case before. They were really a marginalised office before, without any competencies. They were very low in the structure of the UN. He brought it really on the highest level."⁴⁵

Critics have noted that the mere creation of the Gender Advisor post does not necessarily further gender equality or promote women's interests and needs. "I think they want to show that they think of gender, and they make a position called

'Gender Advisor'," Rogova said.⁴⁶ "I think it's a shame," said Hutchinson in 2007:

To me it's like a check box: "Okay, we have a woman. Tick. We've done gender." Or "We will just say we are mainstreaming gender." The OSCE doesn't have a dedicated gender person, "but it's okay because we have mainstreamed it. Tick." This just definitely isn't acceptable.

I think it's the lack of understanding: just because you open a program and you stick a woman in it, doesn't mean you are doing anything in terms of gender. It means you have your nice little gender balance column, filled out.

Officials tended to departmentalise issues and to see gender as a separate issue. Gender must be considered and made applicable in all areas of the mission's work, the very meaning of gender mainstreaming.

"I'll be very honest," Hutchinson said, trying to explain how difficult it was for her to persuade her colleagues that UNMIK should consider gender equality in all aspects of its work:

Minorities are minorities, and we [as gender experts] have often been excluded from issues of minorities. It's the same as in the economic working groups. ... I'm not an economist but I'd be very much interested in the economic aspect of everything, and I have always pushed to say I'd like to be on the standards working group of the economy.

"Oh no! We need to sort the economy out first and then we'll talk about gender."

It's the same, "We'll sort the refugees, the minorities, the Internally Displaced Persons... then you tell me your gender aspect."

"52 percent of these people don't need to have a voice?" I asked. So, while we are trying to work on it, of course there are obstacles.

Despite its mandate under Resolution 1325 to include women in decision-making processes, "to voice their concerns and articulate their proposals to the highest UN authorities,"⁴⁷ the UNMIK OGA also often butted heads with activists. "We've had a very rocky relationship," Hutchinson admitted. As Vuniqi said in 2007, "the OGA office is the worst experience, really":

They are meant to be our voice. They are meant to be our partner, but that never happened. Time to time you know they would pick some organisation up, work with them, but that was not their role. I mean when you see their role and what they did, you can see how minor and small and problematic the whole thing was.

...

I don't know how they managed to have these persons. All the time they were changing and coming up with people who were very narrow minded, very prejudiced, without any knowledge of the country, of the situation on the ground, and without any will to understand. They would come and go, never landing here, never being in Kosovo, with their minds and with their feet, you know? Sometimes they would change after six months.⁴⁸

Back in 2011, "the women who were leading the process didn't know what gender was," said Edita Tahiri's political advisor Arjeta Rexhaj. "Sometimes we got the picture they wanted to extend their salaries by continuing to work in Kosovo and not talk about issues. The Resolution is not implemented even by those who created it."⁴⁹

In 2008, UNMIK underwent a reconfiguration in which OGA ceased to exist, replaced by a Gender Focal Point.⁵⁰ Since then, UNMIK reported having radically changed the way they

mainstream gender. As Javiera Thais Santa Cruz, the UNMIK Gender Advisor in 2020, explained:

Prior to the introduction of an UNMIK-specific strategy, the mission was guided by and implemented a UN headquarters generic policy ... The first UNMIK Gender [Framework] Strategy was developed in 2017 and was a significant milestone in that it was a Kosovo-specific strategy for the mission. The [Gender Framework] Strategy ... is overseen by the UNMIK Gender Task Force, which is chaired by the SRSG, [and this] has demonstrated that committed leadership is key in advancing the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda.

Among the strategic priorities of the 2020-21 Strategy are the meaningful participation of women in peace and political processes; addressing barriers to women's equal access to justice; strengthening institutional and societal efforts to address sexual and gender-based violence; supporting women entrepreneurs; outreach and cooperation with women's groups and partners; and the systematic integration of gender analysis into UNMIK's planning, programming, and reporting systems. We have a dedicated budget line for programmatic activities with a specific focus on women, peace, and security and all other projects are reviewed by the Gender Adviser to ensure gender is mainstreamed throughout.⁵¹

UNMIK also established an Implementation Plan on Gender Parity in 2018. While UNMIK's top position of SRSG has consistently been held by men, by the end of February 2021, 41 percent of the mission's personnel were women. Among international staff, which has the biggest rotation rate, women comprised 45 percent. An equal number of women and men attend senior management meetings, including the Focal Point for Women, which assists with recruiting more women towards gender parity.⁵² In 2019, UNMIK SRSG Zahir Tanin took pride

in the fact that women held 40 percent of the mission's leadership posts.⁵³ Indeed, since he arrived in the mission as SRSG in 2015, "there have been 119 recruitments, 55 percent of which have been women", Thais Santa Cruz said.⁵⁴

UNMIK has developed mandatory training and briefings for all staff. These cover topics, such as prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse; prevention of sexual harassment and abuse for UN personnel; and introductory courses for UN staff. Staff attend a mandatory conduct and discipline briefing, as well as a security briefing that includes gender-specific issues.⁵⁵ Non-mandatory training for all staff includes topics such as gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive protection of civilians.

UNMIK has a particularly strong presence in northern Kosovo, where, despite improvements in peacebuilding,⁵⁶ the region remains rattled by conflict, and efforts to promote peace remain particularly relevant. With people there of all ethnicities still displaced from their homes, persisting parallel political structures, and enduring incidents of everyday violence, few women feel at peace or secure.⁵⁷ In this context, Serb women's rights activist Tijana Simić LaValley said UNMIK has fallen short in its responsibility to adequately listen to women's needs:

The first ten years there was really little talk about [1325]; it was just left in a drawer. The last 10 years has been just awareness-raising [about the Resolution]. We mark the Resolution every year with conferences, etc. ... [I remember in May 2019] we were talking about victims of gender-based violence, and there was this guy [Miroslav Jenča, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Europe, Central Asia, and the Americas] who we were supposed to meet, and he was late. He arrived with three other men and sat down at this round table. There was only one woman, a Gender Advisor. As we women were talking, the men were very much like, "Let's get this over with, and let's get home." They looked at me, probably expecting me to

talk about ethnic issues. Everything just boiled out of me. I just asked them to try doing 1325 and CEDAW within UNMIK. There are very few women in the UNMIK mission in Mitrovica North; they are very unapproachable, and they don't listen. We are irrelevant to them.⁵⁸

Thus, amid several improvements within UNMIK, some women rights activists still felt that the mission did not listen closely to their needs.

Years prior, when activists heard that a new European Union Rule of Law Mission (EULEX) would replace UNMIK, they rallied to document UNMIK's earlier shortcomings and to encourage the new EULEX mission not to repeat UNMIK's mistakes. The EULEX Human Rights and Gender Office (HRGO) was established as "an advisory and policy office that has a predominantly preventive, advisory and coordination function in ensuring that all EULEX Kosovo activities respect international standards concerning human rights and gender mainstreaming." The Office had two positions for international gender experts and one position for a national gender expert since the mission opened in 2008.⁵⁹

Despite all this, the general feeling in 2011 was that gender "was planned to be marginalised" within EULEX. When asked in 2007 about the mechanisms that the EU was putting in place from its headquarters in Brussels towards implementing Resolution 1325, Hutchinson said:

I was told [that people in Brussels] don't see why they would have to have somebody advising, owning gender, because there wouldn't be enough work. ... So, I don't believe that they actually understand at their highest levels, to be able to filter it down to the level that's going to be in Kosovo. I think they are going to throw or bandy around the word "1325," like they will "gender mainstreaming," "gender balance," but they lack an understanding of what it is.

And I also said, "If you are going to use 1325, you need to understand that you are then going to be held accountable for implementing 1325. Because you cannot simply use it as a word. You will be held accountable on how well you do this, and if you are actually going ... to show a commitment to gender. It is not a commitment unless you implement it, so you need to be very careful and understand where you want to go with the work you are going to do. Because as far as I'm concerned, a unit that is set up for gender, puppies, candy, gender, is not a commitment to 1325, or to women's role in the future of Kosovo."

Thus, in the beginning, EULEX did not fare much better than UNMIK in implementing Resolution 1325, as illustrated by the underrepresentation of women and insufficient attention to women's security, described in later chapters. But then, several developments occurred within the EU in Brussels, as explained previously, ranging from strategies to strategic resources.

In 2012, the Gender Advisor position became institutionalised as a high-level position within EULEX, reporting directly to the Head of Mission Office. This has enabled the Gender Advisor to provide strategic and operational advice, particularly on gender mainstreaming and coordinating "all Mission internal and external actions concerning gender mainstreaming, promotion of gender equality, as well as implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda".⁶⁰ Chiara Tagliani, EULEX Gender Advisor, explained her role:

The [Gender] Advisor provides inputs on mission documents and reports, relevant legislation, and supports implementation mechanisms regarding gender equality and women's rights in the area of Rule of Law. Additionally, the Advisor performs research and analyses, designs, and delivers gender trainings, and liaises with Kosovo institutions, civil society organisations and international organisations. [T]he

Gender Advisor liaises regularly with all relevant counterparts and represents the Mission at the table of the [UN Women-coordinated] Security and Gender Group (SGG). Together with these counterparts, the Gender Advisor identifies areas where the Mission brings its added value either by direct intervention or through support and assistance. Examples of this are the several awareness-raising campaigns (Speak up on Time, gender equality, fight against gender-based violence) implemented by the Mission in coordination with its counterparts (the Institute for Forensic Medicine, KWN, Women's Rights NGOs), the undersigning of several statements issued by the SGG, as well as the numerous capacity-building trainings delivered, the last one of which focused on domestic violence first responders, and the implementation of several longer-term projects, like the one in support of the Association of Kosovo Corrections Women.⁶¹

Tagliani also explained that since 2015, EULEX has in place "a network of Gender Focal Points composed of staff members from different mission units and offices, appointed to assist the Gender Advisor in facilitating gender mainstreaming and the integration of gender perspective in the work of their respective offices."⁶²

In November 2020, the EU launched the Gender Action Plan III, "an ambitious agenda for gender equality and women's empowerment in the EU's external action service".⁶³ According to this new plan, as a CSDP mission, EULEX and the EU Office will need to develop a country-level implementation plan, and there will be consultative mechanisms with grassroots women's activists and civil society organisations (CSOs).⁶⁴

Meanwhile, the EUSR in Kosovo became one of the first non CSDP-EU missions worldwide in which a full-time Gender Advisor position was established in 2018. The appointment came after years of lobbying by women's rights activists

coupled with an internal push by EU Gender Focal Points and high-level staff members regarding the need for such a position. According to the EU Gender Advisor, Reyes Charle Cuellar, “[The] simple fact that there is a gender advisor in the EUSR, shows that the EU in Kosovo is concerned about gender issues.” She reflected:

There are more and more people [working at the EU] that are aware of what gender equality entails in general and also about the different instruments of the EU to implement gender equality. Specific awareness about Resolution 1325 varies. However, many of our programs, projects, and political dialogue opportunities aim at opening the minds of everybody and influencing the Government on the importance of the presence of women. Numbers are not enough, but the presence of women is at the core of the Resolution as a necessary minimum. In 2018, the first event I helped organise as a Gender Advisor was the launching of the *Kosovo Gender Analysis*, undertaken by KWN and funded by the EU. The newly elected Prime Minister was invited. It was disheartening to witness how he had to explain in a room full of powerful and competent women that he had only appointed a handful of women among the more than 100 positions of ministers and deputy prime ministers in his government. Today the situation is very different. There are already voices asking for good election results and for women to be mirrored in the composition of the new government. During the time that I have been a Gender Advisor, we have tried to include attention to gender equality and the importance of women’s perspectives and women’s voices in the speaking points of meetings between the Head of Mission and other staff with government officials. We want to think that with the example and participation of the EU in different actions and activities

that deal with gender representation in the government, we had our modest contribution.⁶⁵

She also observed that the EU's legal review mechanism has contributed to reflecting a gender perspective within several laws and policies, including the Criminal Code of Kosovo, Law on Gender Equality, and Labour Law, all based on consultations with women's rights activists and gender equality experts in Kosovo.

Having a full-time Gender Advisor position has enabled the EU to meet more with women in Kosovo to better understand and address their needs. For twelve consecutive months, the EU organised the EU "Gender Talks", a series of discussions that engaged up to 500 women and men in debates on gender equality in relation to various topics, such as elections, people with disabilities, freedom of expression, politics, and health. The Global Open Day, organised together with the UN in 2019, focused on the implementation of Resolution 1325. The EUSR also had programs to empower diverse women's engagement in political and public life. The EUSR's project "Women in Politics, Confidence, Influence, and Effective Leadership, Ensuring Gender-responsive and Inclusive Political Dialogue Processes" related directly to implementing Resolution 1325, as it aimed at advancing Kosovo women's representation in politics, decision-making, and international negotiations. The Gender Advisor engages regularly in preparing speaking points and mainstreaming gender in policies and laws and contributes towards ensuring a gender perspective in all the EU's political, programmatic, and policy work.

Meanwhile, the EU Office in Kosovo also has had a Gender Focal Point in its Cooperation Section since 2015 and has contracted external expertise from KWN to support the gender mainstreaming of all of its external financing. This has had the added value of institutionalising the engagement of women's rights organisations in all of the EU's planning and programming, ensuring that it considers a gender perspective

that addresses women's and girls' needs. Starting in 2017, the EU also made introductory gender training obligatory for all staff and made tailored mentoring available, provided by KWN as an experienced women's rights organisation.

Historically, the OSCE, tasked with furthering democratisation, has had gender focal points rather than gender advisors. Qosaj Mustafa who used to work with the OSCE said, "The gender focal point was basically a task that was 'added on' to somebody who had a bit better knowledge about women's rights."⁶⁶ The nature of an "add on" task among other responsibilities made it difficult to balance at times. Gender focal points also lacked the influence of high-level advisors. "I had certain leverage," said Theordora Krumova, a former OSCE gender focal point. "But at the same time this designated position opened my eyes to see how little I could do from my mid-level position."⁶⁷

"If you don't have that seniority and involvement at the highest level, then you will not gain [much]," said Qosaj Mustafa back in 2011:

Gender focal points have to cover a wide variety of issues and activities. In mid-2009, they tried to address that by appointing the Deputy Head of Mission as the gender focal point for the mission. It was just added onto the Deputy Head of Mission, but again, deputy head of missions realistically are people that come from diplomatic and other backgrounds, so they don't have that much expertise on gender. I believe they changed that now recently. They now have another person who actually advises the Deputy Head of Mission on gender issues. But again, it's more of an advisory capacity rather than having a strategic management tool to actually implement gender budgeting and gender mainstreaming. In Vienna they have a senior gender advisor, but you know their resources are very limited. They cannot advise and

work individually with each mission because they have to cover a much wider variety of issues and activities.

[Also, at the mission level] people don't know how to do it. They are not that well trained in the induction course in Vienna. It is really about having these 20 or 30-minute sessions on the division of gender and sex and that's all that people get; they don't get concrete tools how to do gender mainstreaming.

This is why "gender advisors at the senior management level and full-time gender program officers are needed, not only gender focal points," emphasised UNDP Senior Gender Advisor Jocelyne Talbot in 2011. "We need these multi-level positions. This is work. These are full-time jobs."⁶⁸ Talbot stressed the importance of placing senior gender advisors at the highest level where they have the mandate and ability to bring a gender perspective into the institution.

Since 2011, the OSCE has taken steps to address these issues. They have established a mission gender focal point at the highest decision-making position, which is the Deputy Head of Mission, and appointed gender advisors and officers to support gender mainstreaming in the Mission and to monitor progress.⁶⁹ The Mission organises continuous basic and advanced gender equality training for the focal points and other employees. For instance, in 2020 the Mission organised trainings on gender mainstreaming and mainstreaming attention to gender-based violence into work and programming. The gender focal points and management have compulsory gender performance indicators included in their annual performance evaluation. Biljana Nastovska, Gender Advisor in the OSCE Mission in Kosovo elaborated:

We have an extensive and comprehensive policy, our Gender Action Plan, which is online. [It] is divided in two plans: mainstreaming gender equality inside OSCE: Human resource policies, management,

involvement, communication, etc. [And the] second part: related to everything we are doing with our beneficiaries. All our programs ... have to mainstream gender in everyday implementation. [We] gender advisors or officers ... are the ones securing the mainstreaming component [and] monitoring every six months the progress. In the end of the year, we compile the results and analyse them. Then we decide what is going to happen next year, comparing the progress. For instance, I completely changed our gender action plan and redesigned it after COVID-19 happened.⁷⁰

With the establishment of a gender focal point at the highest level, a gender advisor, and additional gender focal points, OSCE seems better placed now than in 2011 to gender mainstream the mission's efforts.

Amid several internal improvements, in terms of external relations with women's rights groups and advocates, some concern still existed among activists regarding OSCE's approach and mission. An activist who preferred anonymity said:

OSCE is doing the work of women's rights organisations! OSCE totally missed their mission in Kosovo. Instead of working on what they are mandated for, on free democratic elections, they are doing [the work] of civil society organisations, and they are competing for donors' funds for programs that women's rights organisations should do. So, OSCE, in my opinion, should not even be in Kosovo, or they should have an office and work especially with minority communities. Now we have the EU in Kosovo, and we don't need another institution like OSCE doing the same things or copying and imitating others. OSCE doesn't implement Resolution 1325.⁷¹

For some activists, internal policy changes were insufficient, if all OSCE representatives did not implement the Resolution's other aims, like ensuring consultation with and representation of Kosovo women's needs and priorities in their work. While OSCE has dealt with several issues important to women like property rights, gender-based violence, and women's participation in politics, sometimes these efforts have not been planned with sufficient consultation with women's rights groups. Thus, OSCE's efforts sometimes stepped on activists' toes, undermined their indigenous, grounded efforts to address women's needs, and even contributed to unnecessary overlap. Activists wished OSCE would consult them more in planning programs, and not only afterward.

Over at UNDP, back in 2011, evidence suggested that UNDP Senior Gender Advisor Jocelyne Talbot's senior position enabled her to mainstream gender within the UNDP to a greater extent than, for example, the focal points who had served within UNDP before her. She installed institutional arrangements towards furthering gender equality, including the implementation of Resolution 1325.⁷² Her senior position enabled her to influence budget planning, as well as internal procedures such as procurement and hiring. The instalment of the gender marker for identifying the extent to which gender was mainstreamed within UNDP programs indicates the progress she facilitated over time.⁷³ Talbot later left UNDP, and gender equality responsibilities were assumed by the Resident Coordinator/Resident Representative, at the highest level, and chaired by the Gender Programme Advisor.⁷⁴

The work of UNDP and other UN agencies is guided by the UN's 2030 Agenda, which consists of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) for people, planet, and prosperity. Two goals are directly relevant to implementing Resolution 1325: Goal 5 on achieving Gender Equality and Empowering all Women and Girls, and Goal 16 on Promoting Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Providing Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at all levels. The 2030 Agenda commits to

ensure full participation of women in peacebuilding and state building.⁷⁵ Moreover, UNDP has an international Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021, the third such strategy, which contains several commitments, including to assist in the implementation of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security and Resolution 2250 on Youth, Peace, and Security by facilitating inclusion of women and young women in negotiation, mediation, and decision-making positions.⁷⁶

Several UN agencies also have strategies and action plans towards gender equality at least at an international level.⁷⁷ These have led to several programs toward gender equality in Kosovo as well.

Internationally, UN Women has the mandate to further gender equality not only externally, but also within and among UN agencies.⁷⁸ In Kosovo, this has meant efforts to establish an inter-agency coordination mechanism on gender equality that brings together all the heads of UN agencies. Additionally, together with KWN and OSCE, UN Women has coordinated the Security Gender Group (SGG) since 2007, which brings together Kosovo institutions, UN agencies, civil society, and other international organisations to discuss issues related to enhancing women and girls' security.⁷⁹ SGG seeks to enhance coordination and information-sharing among members towards increasing women's safety and security.⁸⁰

Meanwhile, the establishment of UN Women in 2010 as a UN entity replacing UNIFEM seems to have had interesting implications for various UN agencies' implementation of Resolution 1325, amid broader commitments to gender equality. In practice, at times other UN agencies may have used the transformation of UN Women to shirk responsibilities for implementing Resolution 1325. According to Luljeta Demolli from the Kosovo Gender Studies Centre (KGSC), "UNIFEM and UN Women are the [only] international organisations that worked for the implementation of 1325". When the research team contacted UNDP for an interview, a representative replied: "Did you first contact UN Women about this? As the main UN Agency working on the implementation of Resolution

1325 is UN Women.”⁸¹ We reminded them that they also are responsible for implementing Resolution 1325, and then they accepted to be interviewed. According to Rogova:

UN agencies [in Kosovo] still have a lot to do, except of course UN Women. I don't understand this part about UN agencies. Whenever it is about gender or 1325, they say, "We have UN Women". That's wrong! Resolution 1325 should be addressed by all agencies. It's not just UN Women that should implement and advocate for it. It should be all.

UN agencies undertook some initiatives to change this in 2020, particularly in marking the 20th Anniversary of Resolution 1325. UNDP, UN Women, and others cooperated to support several efforts, including the inclusion of young women in peace processes.

In summary, missions are "big machineries" that are difficult to turn, said Sirpa Rautio who had worked for both the UN and EU:

I like to think that we achieved something. Definitely we became more of a player. It was planned [for gender] to be marginalised. I think that we managed to get out of that, and get to the strategic planning point, get to the processes, and, in doing so, get a bit more influence. But it was made unnecessarily difficult due to the mandate's weakness on human rights and gender and our position and size.

Aside from a few notable accomplishments, feelings of marginalisation and powerlessness seemed to be recurring themes among gender advisors in Kosovo during Resolution 1325's first decade of implementation. As Hutchinson summarised, "I think there has been a separation of, 'Oh gender... You do your thing. And we will do the serious things. We'll do the real things. And yes, we'll play with you because

we have to, but we are not really going to take you seriously. And I think that is the biggest obstacle.”

The exception at that time was Talbot, who held a senior position within UNDP and thus was able to influence shifts in policy. Following suit and perhaps based on lessons learned, by 2020, most all international missions in Kosovo had full-time gender advisors. This, they noted, contributed to several improvements in gender mainstreaming within their respective organisations and thus, also, furthered the implementation of Resolution 1325.

Gender advisors’ ability to ensure the interests of women are represented seems to depend on their seniority and power within the mission; own knowledge of and dedication to implementing the Resolution, including commitment to engaging local women leaders; and superiors’ willingness to follow their recommendations. Their ability to further gender equality can be diminished by internal resistance, fear of losing their job, a lack of expertise, insufficient gender disaggregated data, short mandates, and constant staff turnover, so “you always have to redo things that you think you’ve already sorted out”. These obstacles, mentioned in 2011, apparently have faded with time, as institutions became accustomed to gender advisors and saw the benefits they could bring. Growing awareness of the relevance of furthering gender equality to the very implementation of their missions, often brought by gender advisors and policies requiring training, have contributed to increased awareness within the missions and thus to improved implementation of Resolution 1325.

Despite improvements, most gender advisors and focal points in Kosovo still reported feeling alone, insufficiently supported, and under-resourced. In some cases, they had extensive responsibilities for internal and external gender mainstreaming that spanned across sizeable missions with hundreds of employees. As one commented, “Very often, this is ‘mission impossible’”.⁸²

Amid substantial strides forward, several century-old social norms still require time to change, and for this, beyond

gender advisors, leadership needs to be actively engaged, as one gender advisor observed:

Gender structures are everywhere, so there will always be issues. They are present in international institutions, as well, and it creates barriers for implementing 1325. Still there is a need for institutional change. Even with all the political pressure on implementing this Agenda, you spend so much time. It's like you have to personally convince everyone, which is an awful position that we put gender advisors in. We put an expectation on them to change people's behaviour and social attitudes embedded for centuries, and how can you do that? It's impossible. The best way, I think, is to be pragmatic in what we *can* change. It's high leadership's role to contribute to these broader changes. We can see some movement there but gender structures persist.

Training the troops

"This was a process of learning by doing."

- Tilly Stroosnijder, UNMIK Police Gender Advisor,
2011

KFOR also had a late start in terms of institutionalising a gender perspective in Kosovo. Respective troop contributing countries had a responsibility to provide pre-deployment training as per Resolution 1325. However, women's rights activists felt additional training was necessary. In 2007, Rogova recalled efforts to encourage KFOR to provide training:

In 2005, Kvinna till Kvinna organised a meeting in Swebat, the Swedish KFOR camp. We lectured there about women's condition in Kosovo, 1325, and our culture. That was it. We wanted to continue these lectures, but it didn't happen.

In 2007 I was invited to a meeting in Sweden where [UN Special Envoy to the Kosovo Status Negotiations] Martti Ahtisaari was speaking. They invited me to speak on Kosovo's status. The meeting involved high level decision-makers like the ambassadors of Serbia and of Russia to Sweden, among others. After I spoke, Carl Henrik Assargard [former political advisor at the KFOR Multinational Taskforce Headquarters] approached me because what I shared there really struck him. He said, "We have to meet."

When we returned to Kosovo, he came to the office. We talked, and three hours later he said, "Okay, what would KWN like from KFOR?"

I explained, "Since 1999 we really have been eager to go to the bases regularly to talk about culture, women's position, and 1325." Following our conversation, he organised these meetings.

Women's rights activists spoke twice at Swedish, Finnish, and Irish KFOR bases in 2007.⁸³ However, when Carl Henrik Assargard's mission ended, so too did training sessions involving women's rights activists. His successor did not continue the program. Some bases, like the United States military base, never agreed to participate in the program. "The U.S. doesn't need it, huh?" Luljeta Vuniqi said:

It's 2007, so you can see how much attention they paid to this. They came in 1999, and after eight years they decided to do this: only for two hours, some awareness-raising about gender issues. I'm glad, but a lot of time has been lost. It could have been done in a different way, and it would have had some impact.

They really do not pay any attention to gender. All I see from KFOR are very strange TV ads and huge billboards all over Kosovo with very patronising messages. For example, the KFOR billboards where you see a woman showing a pie, saying "I am Kosovo, too." The point was, "I am included. I am here." And you have this traditional, stereotypical role of women cooking pies, like, "Don't forget the women; they cook pies." They couldn't think about anything else, like a picture of a businesswoman or a woman working. Having a woman with a pie, saying, "I am Kosovo, too" is insulting, and weird, and prejudiced.⁸⁴

KWN members reacted against the stereotyping of women and men in Kosovo in a letter to KFOR in 2010. Rogova recalled:

At first KFOR came with this billboard of a shirtless man, and a message "KFOR is strong". We reacted.

[W]hen we sent the media an article criticising KFOR, the then German Head of KFOR [Markus Bentler] called us to meet. [H]e was so upset. He said, "I don't understand why you had to go to the media. You could come to me." And I was like, "Because you would not invite us until we went to the media, and I know this from experience." [H]e was really honest and said, "Ok, tell me what to do." I said, "Ok, number 1, have a Gender Advisor in your mission. Number 2, consult us before you publicise your outreach campaigns so we can advise you on the content and approach."

Activists received an instant response from KFOR. "They changed the ad," said Belgjyzare Muharremi, former KWN Board Chair, "and they consulted us each time something new came up, saying, 'Is it okay how we have represented women and men?'"⁸⁵ KWN members have since reviewed KFOR public relations materials to ensure that they are gender sensitive.

Moreover, as Rogova recalled, "I'm not kidding, not long after our meeting, a Gender Advisor came in the mission." Indeed, a NATO decision to establish a gender advisor position came the same year, with the first advisor hired in November 2010.⁸⁶ The process to establish this position had begun in December 2007, based on a formal NATO Euro Atlantic Partnership Council policy on implementing Resolution 1325, but creating the position within KFOR took time. KFOR's second Gender Advisor, Elisabeth Schleicher, encouraged the employment of women within KFOR, such as in Liaison Monitoring Teams that are in daily contact with the population.⁸⁷ She also worked to mainstream gender perspectives into KFOR operations by educating and training staff.

"Since that time, our cooperation has continued," Rogova said. KWN began attending regular meetings with KFOR, advising on other media campaigns. For several years, KWN trained each new generation of KFOR troops when they arrived in Kosovo. Every six months, troops discussed with

KWN the situation of women in Kosovo, KWN's ongoing initiatives, and how KFOR troops could implement Resolution 1325.

In the last decade, KFOR has undergone several changes and improvements since establishing the Office of the Gender Advisor (GENAD office) in 2010. The GENAD office has continued to develop training programs for specific audiences and levels within KFOR; integrated gender in the Liaison Monitoring Team (LMT) where soldiers liaise with the local population; and included attention to gender equality within civil-military cooperation projects. For example, KFOR LMT teams donated materials to the domestic violence shelter in Ferizaj, goods during the COVID-19 pandemic, and equipment to the organisation *Jeta* [Life], which supports and trains women to become economically independent. This office cooperates with women's rights groups, UNMIK, the EU Office/EUSR, EULEX, OSCE, and institutions such as the Ministry of the Kosovo Security Force.⁸⁸ These efforts have sought to further security, as per the concept of human security, according to KFOR representatives.

In 2017, KFOR organised "Gender Perspective Day", inviting KWN activists to speak.⁸⁹ Then, signalling KWN and KFOR's continued cooperation, as per KWN's request, KFOR organised a conference to mark the 20th Anniversary of Resolution 1325 in 2020. "I have never heard of a military base holding a conference on gender equality and women's empowerment inside the base. This time is the first time," Rogova observed.⁹⁰ Indeed, KFOR's experience implementing Resolution 1325 in Kosovo has been showcased within NATO and informed peacekeeping operations globally.

Meanwhile, over at the UNMIK Police, Tilly Stroosnijder served as the Gender Advisor and was the first police gender advisor in UN missions worldwide as part of a "pilot" initiative in 2003. At that time, her problems had to do with the bureaucratic structure of the UN:

For the UN this was a process of learning by doing. In the world of gender advisors my appointment was received as a direct threat by the [UNMIK] Office of Gender Affairs. There was a lack of understanding within UNMIK about how police operate, communicate, "how" to implement gender in a security sector. This slowed down the process of the two-folded job I was assigned to, which was internally and externally mainstreaming gender in relevant fields of police in the mission and in the Kosovo Police Service. Secondly, I was isolated by the gender advisor of the UNMIK mission and was excluded and not recognised in the work I did. And I was excluded in the UN reporting and meeting system with DPKO.

Stroosnijder said she had to "fight" for mandatory gender and domestic violence training for incoming police personnel, which was not installed until 2004.⁹¹ The training dealt with domestic violence, trafficking, child abuse, and the zero-tolerance policy for UNMIK police visiting blacklisted bars where sex trafficking was believed to occur. While she saw some positive changes over time, she felt much more had to be done:

The UN now has gender advisors in DPKO police and military. This is a big step forward, but not enough from my perspective. After 12 years in missions at the operational level, I see that they understand the gender concept, the "what," but they seriously lack understanding of the "how" process at the operational level. Implementing gender within the police differs from the military, and it differs among police forces. We need to accept this in order to be successful. We *must* adjust ourselves to the mission and the gender reality in the host country. SERVING together with national interlocutors in a contextual manner is key for progress in gender equality and sustainability towards local ownership!

"NO WOMEN IN THE NEGOTIATION TEAM"

"The Security Council should change their attitude about the Resolution ... because when they came with their mission in Kosovo, only one woman from England was an Ambassador; all others were men. The first step for implementing this Resolution should start from the United Nations itself; they should give an opportunity for women to participate more."

- Gjylnaze Sylja, Member of Parliament, 2007

It was 2001, and UNMIK representatives prepared the agenda for the first UN Security Council delegation to visit Kosovo. Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury of Bangladesh, who was leading the delegation, wanted to meet women's groups. However, UNMIK representatives said, "The delegation's agenda is already full." Ambassador Chowdhury, an advocate of Resolution 1325's initial passage, insisted on meeting women. He asked for the hours of the scheduled agenda.

"8:00 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.," UNMIK responded.

Ambassador Chowdhury requested a meeting with women's groups at 9:30 p.m. at his hotel.

Although women leaders felt it was an embarrassment to meet late at night at a hotel, rather than officially, they agreed because of Ambassador Chowdhury's persistence and commitment.

Women politicians and activists went to the hotel together. They were happily surprised to find Ambassador

Chowdhury's entire delegation present for the meeting. UNMIK representatives also attended, including the Deputy Head of UNMIK, Tom Kennings, who had been in Kosovo for nearly two years and had never requested a meeting with women, women's rights activists said.

Ambassador Chowdhury's initiative to meet women set a positive example of seeking to "increase the participation of women and women's organisations in activities to prevent, manage, resolve and respond to conflict and violations of women's and girls' human rights," as Resolution 1325 advises.⁹² It was, however, a consultation which resulted more from his political will than from Security Council instructions, as later visiting missions would illustrate. "For me, he was a hero," Rogova said.

In December 2002, the second UN Security Council delegation arrived in Kosovo, led by Norwegian Ambassador Ole Peter Kolby. Yet again, UNMIK did not include meeting with women on the agenda. Again, women lobbied to meet the delegation, and again the meeting took place after regular working hours. When the Security Council delegation entered the meeting room, Kosovar women saw that out of 15 members, it included a single woman.⁹³ Rogova recalled:

So, we were sitting, not just Albanian women, but there were Serb women, Bosnian women, Turkish women, Roma women. We were all talking about Kosovo's political status and Resolution 1244. Then Ambassador Kolby interrupted, "Status is an issue for political parties. Let's talk about women's issues. Let's talk about Resolution 1325 for example."

We looked at him like, "What?"

We were insulted and surprised at the Ambassador's obvious lack of knowledge that, in accordance with Resolution 1325, women should be involved in negotiating Kosovo's final political status. We asked him, "Don't you think that status is an issue

that affects women? This is directly stated in Resolution 1325."⁹⁴

And then we said, "Speaking about 1325, how come your delegation has only one woman?" This guy was so embarrassed.

He said, "I'm sorry I have another meeting." He left.

Another Scandinavian arrived in Kosovo some years later, Rogova continued:

Kai Eide did not want to meet women at all. And his mission was important: it was on the political status of Kosovo. Kai Eide was a Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General in 2005. He was monitoring the implementation of the "Standards for Kosovo" [and assessing "whether the conditions were in place to enter into a political process designed to determine the future status of Kosovo"].⁹⁵ Every time he came to Kosovo and Serbia he failed to meet women.

He was finally like, "Okay," after we pushed to meet with him.

When we met with him, we started talking about status, and this guy was like, "Do not talk to me like men. Let's talk about women's issues."

And we were like, "Woo-pa!" And we said, "1325 gives us the right to talk about status."

And he said, "Oh I feel sorry..." because he never read the Resolution, and he turned to his assistant and said, "What does the Resolution say?" So then he was quiet. The man shut his mouth, and he didn't say a word because he didn't know about the Resolution.

So, lack of political will and lack of knowledge, these are two reasons why it's not implemented.

Notably, Ambassador Kai Eide's final report on Kosovo's preparedness to start negotiations on its status did not mention women once.⁹⁶

Three out of four reports written by UN Security Council monitoring missions visiting Kosovo did not mention women or girls at all.⁹⁷ The one report that did merely stated that the Head of Mission, Ambassador Ole Peter Kolby, met women in 2002. It stated: "Civil society representatives emphasised that women of different ethnicities were working together on peace-building projects but did not receive any support from UNMIK or from OSCE."⁹⁸ The report cited Resolution 1325 and "noted" how "women could also contribute to the development of civil society and play an important role in reconciling communities."⁹⁹ However, the report did not mention issues women face or violations of women's human rights. In comparison to other issues discussed in the report, women's needs were glossed over.

The Unity Team negotiates... (without women)

"Women were not part of the discussion on the final status of Kosovo."

- Arjeta Rexhaj, Political Advisor to Deputy Prime Minister Edita Tahiri, 2011

"In the years 2005 and 2006, Kosovo was preparing for another phase of peace talks with Serbia," said Edita Tahiri, "and while the ideas were launched that status should be discussed with Serbia under the UN mediation of Ahtisaari, we women wanted to have women at the negotiating table for peace and the resolution of the political question of Kosovo. We really worked hard in different ways. First, we organised between us this coordination between women in politics and civil society leaders, also individually, to lobby for having women in Vienna talks."

Rogova recalled:

There was so much division between political parties. The late President Rugova, together with UN representatives, decided to form this so-called political forum in September 2005 to bring unity. The then SRSG Søren Jessen-Petersen and Rugova talked, and they offered the "Unity Team."

Who was in that Unity Team? Political party leaders whose parties won seats in Parliament, plus the Chair of the Parliament, plus the Prime Minister. And so, from that forum when negotiations started, those were the people that led the negotiations. And that was their excuse to us...

When we said, "Why are there no women; we have two political parties led by women?"

"None of them got parliamentary seats," they said. "That's why they are not in the team."

We didn't accept that; that's their excuse.

And then there is another seat on the negotiation team for civil society. Without consulting civil society, they have decided to bring this guy Blerim Shala to represent civil society. He was the Chief Editor of the newspaper *Zëri*. But Blerim Shala was not chosen by civil society. He was chosen by those leaders. There was a possibility there to have someone from civil society, some strong woman. But no, they decided everything themselves without asking anyone.

Then we said, "If we are not going to have women on the negotiation team, we are going to have women in working groups." So, we pushed to have women in the working groups from the start.¹⁰⁰

Despite the obstacles facing them, the women of Kosovo were determined to play their part in negotiations.

"And that was the period when we started the Women's Peace Coalition," Rogova said.¹⁰¹ "KWN with the Women in Black Network decided to start this coalition because, number one, there was no woman in the negotiation team. Yes, they had one woman [from Serbia], but she was not representing the women of Serbia, so they were feeling like they don't have a woman either."

The Women's Peace Coalition renewed old ties existing among activists in the region since the days of the former Yugoslavia. During the 1990s, Women in Black Belgrade had served as a regional epicentre for women organising for peace and against the wars in Bosnia and Kosovo. KWN and the Women in Black Network joined forces to advocate for women's improved representation in the negotiations.

Soon after, the Regional Women's Lobby for Peace, Security, and Justice in South East Europe (RWL) was

established in 2006. It brought together prominent women from civil society and politics throughout the former Yugoslavia to advocate on issues of common concern. Both the Coalition and Lobby advocated women's inclusion in the negotiations. Both were significant in that they joined Serbian and Kosovar women, among others in the region, in publicly supporting Kosovo's independence. Tahiri who would later chair RWL recalled:

We used also [RWL] to lobby for having women in the Vienna negotiations [in February 2006]. We lobbied with political parties here, the institutions of the Kosovo Government, the Parliament, and the President. We also lobbied with UNMIK officials. We even lobbied directly with Ahtisaari, by meeting him, by sending different letters... we lobbied the Security Council.

Civil society representatives Igo Rogova, Luljeta Vuniqi, and Flora Macula met with the Security Council delegation in Kosovo, lobbied for this. However, after all that lobbying, the Vienna talks ended up without any woman representative at the table, which we thought was a deficit of democracy and lack of vision. It also showed disrespect for the women in Kosovo who were ready to sacrifice lives during the occupation, taking the highest state responsibilities. Besides that, women have the capacity to do peace-making work. Kosovo women have also the capital, the merit for that. However, all was disregarded.

The Vienna talks were held without women at the table, and I consider it a failure, but not of us as women, because we were proactive. We consider it men's failure. I don't like to be against men. I think that a partnership between the genders can help women, but this was a case where a masculine mentality dominated and left women outside the process. This did not come only from Kosovar men, but also from internationals.

Pretty please, “King” Petersen?

"Let me tell you something: 1325 is primarily for the international troops when they go on their mission: how they should treat women there, how they should support women in international institutions. This is why 1325 was made. But when a war starts, the UN sits together with groups involved in the conflict, and they never think of women. And that's why they 'urge' women to be at the negotiation table rather than require it."

- Igballe Rogova, Executive Director, KWN, 2007

Encouraged by his attention to gender equality issues, women activists turned to SRSG Søren Jesson-Petersen and asked him to include women in the negotiations on Kosovo's final political status. "We hoped that the UN would change and would start implementing the Resolution," said Rogova:

But when the negotiation process started and we realised there were no women in the negotiation team, ... we went to the SRSG and said, "You have to push the negotiation team to have a woman inside."

He said he couldn't do anything.

But this is ridiculous. Let me tell you, he could! Because he pushed whatever else was needed on my government.¹⁰²

Unlike other SRSGs, "I think that he ... really pushed, and he tried," said Vuniqi:

Even though he was trying, and he was listening to us, I think [that] even he did not do what he really could. I mean the SRSG in Kosovo is a very powerful man. They can take any decision they want. I mean in 25 hours he dismissed the President of the Parliament [Mr. Daci]. He dismissed the Prime Minister [Mr. Kosumi]. So, if the [SRSG] can dismiss in 25 hours two of the highest people here, talking about local leadership, then how come ... he or anybody after him, couldn't do anything to change the content of the negotiating team? It's such a smaller task than dismissing both persons.

But Søren Jesson-Petersen was also very frustrated with the situation. He was very sensitive regarding women's issues. In the last meeting that we had [before he left Kosovo] he said, "I failed. I could not convince them to establish a team with women." When men usually fail they do not accept failure this easily, but he did. Somehow this coincided with his position. He was like the King of Kosovo. He could replace prime ministers and ministers and yet he accepted failure this easily. He had regular meetings with women's groups and agreed with them, but in relation to other topics this one was like a side-dish.¹⁰³

“These people that work with Ahtisaari, they did not include gender at all”

“During the Ahtisaari period there were no women, even though they contributed before and after the war.”

- Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, women’s rights activist, 2011

The “Final Status” negotiation process was drawing near. Many hoped that it would put in place a new agreement, replacing Resolution 1244. This time, women thought, that piece of parchment to be signed would have input from women. This time, the negotiators had a responsibility to ensure women’s involvement in the negotiations; they had to because the UN Security Council had said so in Resolution 1325.¹⁰⁴ Finnish Ambassador and Special Envoy to the Kosovo Status negotiations, Martti Ahtisaari, led the process.

“Mr. Ahtisaari was concerned with the continuous involvement of women and women leaders throughout the status definition process,” said Philippe Tissot, from UNMIK’s external affairs, who organised the meetings. “He made a point, every time he came, to meet with civil society representatives, including women leaders.”

Women activists felt differently.

“What was irritating me,” Vepore Shehu said, “was when we asked, ‘Why hasn’t anything been done to have a woman on the negotiation team?’ He presented [Albanian traditionalism] as one of the obstacles, like, ‘We didn’t want to break the tradition.’ You can imagine what kind of an excuse that was!”¹⁰⁵

"We always have to push for meeting," said Rogova. Despite the responsibility of international negotiators under Resolution 1325:

Even with Martti Ahtisaari we always had to push through the Regional Women's Lobby for a meeting. He was always listening, and we thought that he would do something towards implementing the Resolution, but even Martti Ahtisaari did not implement 1325, and he could. He was in charge of the negotiations, and he could say, "According to 1325, I want to see women." But he didn't. I think his main concern was to bring together Serbs and Albanians. He didn't think of other issues.¹⁰⁶

"We really urged and advocated and sent letters for example to implement that part of 1325, which explicitly says that women should be included in the negotiation processes for peace," said Vuniqi.¹⁰⁷

"We tried first with letters," said Rogova, but when that failed, "We had a protest in the street. Together with Women in Black, as part of the Women's Peace Coalition, we both had protests at the same time, on the same day, at the same hour in Pristina and Belgrade."

"No more flowers! We want power," read the placards on 8 March 2006 in Pristina. Women gathered to reject the tradition of giving flowers on International Women's Day and to demand that they be given a seat at the negotiation table.

"It was minus 20 degrees [Celsius]," Rogova recalled, "And we had an outdoor protest with a play, songs, and a big banner saying, 'Resolution 1325 gives us the right to be in the negotiation team.' The banner stayed on the walls of the Parliament building for six or seven months; they were not removing it, but they were not having women in the negotiation team."¹⁰⁸

When they were unable to secure women seats at the table, the Regional Women's Lobby and the Women's Peace

Coalition sought to influence the negotiations through advocacy letters about the preservation and protection of cultural heritage and in support of a just and lasting solution for Kosovo.¹⁰⁹ The latter put women's rights activists in Serbia at risk; the Women in Black office was raided and activists received death threats.

In the end, women participated in the working groups. "We are happy to have women in the working groups," Rogova said, "but it's not the same."

As the negotiations facilitated by Ahtisaari came to a close in the later part of 2007, the Regional Women's Lobby undertook a final push to express the views of some women in the region that Kosovo should be independent, and Resolution 1325 should be considered in any peace agreement. Their letter in support of Kosovo's declaration of independence included signatures from leading politicians and activists from throughout South East Europe, including countries that refused to recognise any declaration of Kosovo's independence.

At the same time, the UN Security Council sent a three-day fact-finding mission before deciding on Kosovo's final status. It arrived in 2007, led by Belgian Ambassador Jonan Verbeke.¹¹⁰ The mission involved 12 ambassadors from the Security Council, whose mission was to collect information on the situation in Kosovo and Serbia. The agenda of the mission included meetings with political leaders from Kosovo, Serbia, and Albania. "We wanted to include women. And we achieved, with some of our friends, ... to include seven women in the reception, not in the formal agenda," recalled Flora Macula from then UNIFEM. Among those who would meet the delegation were Regional Women's Lobby members including Member of Parliament (MP) Teuta Sahatqija, then Minister of Justice Nekibe Kelmendi, and activists Rogova, Vuniqi, and Nataša Kandić and Sonia Biserko from Serbia.

"The Lobby went and sent documents calling for the acceptance of Kosovo's independence," said Teuta Sahatqija. "People like Sonja Biserko and Nataša Kandić, [U.S. Ambassador] Tina Kaidanow, and others ... helped spread the

statement for the recognition of the independence of Kosovo. Our requests were presented throughout the media in the region, in each country, and even in New York.”¹¹¹

Macula recollected women’s efforts to lobby the UN Security Council delegation:

We met prior to the reception to make some kind of strategy, “How to support women to lobby and to deliver this declaration to each member of the Security Council?” ... The declaration was about supporting the independence of Kosovo, of course by respecting all the rights of minorities. And it was signed by all of the members of the Regional Women’s Lobby.

So, the women prepared. We had declarations. Teuta and Nekibe were inside the Parliament. They met members of the Security Council delegation, and they delivered the declaration of the Regional Women’s Lobby.

That night we went together to the reception, and we were waiting for [the Security Council delegation] because they would bring them by bus. when they brought them in the yard of the Parliament, and all the people were surrounding them, I said, ‘Oh, the strategy failed. We do not have access to them.’”

So, we asked the Prime Minister and two of the ministers to help the women reach [the Security Council ambassadors]. I was seeing which of the ambassadors was free to talk, and Tina Kaidanow was so helpful. She took the declaration and started to deliver it and brought to us some of the Security Council ambassadors, so we started talking to them. I was listening to the discussions between [the Russian Ambassador to the Security Council Vitaly] Churkin, Nataša Kandić, and Sonia Biserko.

[Sonia Biserko and Nataša Kandić, human rights activists from Serbia, said that the Security Council] “should consider human rights.”

He said, "Come on, territory is important for many; it's not only human rights." ...

They gave him the declaration and he said, "No, I don't want any kind of paper. Send it, if you want, to the hotel." They sent it to Hotel Victory. He was so rude and after saying that he disappeared. After 15 minutes of discussion with him, he left the reception. The South African representative said something like, "I don't want to talk. I want to eat."¹¹²

Another ambassador "was very disappointed by our questions," Vuniqi added. "[He] said, 'I am not here to discuss women's rights.' He was upset that we did not take the stance of victims in these negotiations, as he had expected."

"And what the Government said in the end was that only the women were lobbying [for Kosovo at the reception], no one else," Macula concluded:

At that time, the Prime Minister and others recognised the force of women lobbying. The result was that they included 1325 in the new Resolution for Kosovo. ... There was one paragraph that referred to the implementation of 1325 and the inclusion of women in peace negotiations. It was the direct consequence of this meeting. ... So, something was achieved. The new resolution [recognising Kosovo's independence] was not even put on the desk of the Security Council because Russia said they would veto it.

As the resolution on Kosovo's independence was never presented to the UN Security Council, no new peace agreement replaced Resolution 1244. Thus, to date, no peace agreement in Kosovo has included "provisions to improve the security and status of women and girls" explicitly.¹¹³ Nor did Ahtisaari's Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement mention Resolution 1325 or girls. "Women" was mentioned a single time in reference to CEDAW.¹¹⁴

“The Resolution strongly demands inclusion of women in decision-making places, especially in peace negotiations,” said Rogova. “All these leaders at local and international [levels], they don’t want to show that. Or they don’t want to give space to women for that position because they say, ‘It’s our duty. It’s men’s duty to talk about peace.’” Thus, neither the mediation team nor the delegations ever seem to have had a gender advisor. Nor were women ever granted official observer status during the negotiations.¹¹⁵ Arjeta Rexhaj summarised:

Since the end of the war and especially during the crucial period of state formation when the process of determining Kosovo’s destiny had started, women’s primary demands in Kosovo were focused on the participation of women in the dialogue and negotiations. ... Women were not part of the discussion on the final status of Kosovo in Vienna in 2006. Then in 2007, the Kosovo Women’s Network and the Kosovo Women’s Lobby advocated for women’s representation in the negotiations for the future status of Kosovo, as foreseen in UN Resolution 1325. Their proposal that a well-known woman politician be included in the negotiation team of Kosovo was ignored. As a result, the final document of the comprehensive proposal on settling the status of Kosovo has been negotiated by male leaders of the main political parties, and women have not been included in this process. This crucial political document regulates the main fields of state formation for Kosovo’s institutions and international missions in Kosovo.¹¹⁶

“We have Edita!” but...

“So this is that victory. We worked hard for Vienna. We got the Brussels Dialogue.”

- Edita Tahiri, Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Policy and National Security and Head of the Technical Dialogue with Serbia, 2011

“The Kosovo-Serbia Dialogue did not ensure the inclusion of a gender perspective. As a negotiation process, it did not abide by UN Resolution 1325 despite the fact that it was facilitated by the EU. Neither was women’s equal representation in the negotiation table ensured. Nor were women’s organisations consulted on the topics that should be part of the process [such as] conflict-related sexual violence, reparations, missing people, justice. On top of that, the conversation on how the agreement would affect women and men, never took place.”

- Jeta Krasniqi, Program Manager, Kosovo Democratic Institute, 2020

“[Resolution 1325] is about recognition that women have a role and impact in conflict resolution, [but] practically it is just a piece of paper. It has never actually been implemented! It is marginalised among UN resolutions.”

- Tijana Simić LaValley, Zensko Pravo, 2020

“If you look today at Edita,” said Rogova, “we did so much work around her. During the negotiations [in 2006] we went in the street and shouted, ‘We have Edita! Why don’t you

take her?"¹¹⁷ Edita Tahiri had experience with negotiations dating back to the Rambouillet Accords Conference in 1999, as well as previously, via her involvement in foreign policy for the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) during the 1990s. Yet, only in 2011 was she given an official diplomatic role in post-war Kosovo, as the Head of the Technical Dialogue with Serbia. The nearly decade-long struggle of women's rights activists to gain a seat at the negotiation table finally paid off. Tahiri's appointment at the forefront of the Technical Dialogue in 2011 was a firm step forward towards implementing Resolution 1325.

"I must say that today, in this time, women have made a lot of progress not only in Kosovo, but also worldwide," Tahiri reflected in 2011:

I think that this is a victory for all our work, to prove to the society that the women of Kosovo have the capacity to lead in a similar manner as men. There should not be gender discrimination [in the state's] leading structures. This is that victory. We worked hard for Vienna. We got the Brussels Dialogue.

To date, the Dialogue has surrounded "practical issues" that can "improve the lives of people," Tahiri said:

We started talking about free movement, free trade, or about energy issues, telecom. Then, we are speaking about returning the documents that Serbia took from Kosovo during the war like the civil registry and cadastre; war damage to Kosovo's cultural heritage; the issue of missing persons, etc. We'll talk about transport and other technical issues.

"To what extent have you been able to raise issues impacting women and girls specifically, within the negotiations," we asked her back in 2011. Tahiri said:

Well, this has not been a topic, but I am sure that in the time when the topic of war damage will come up, we will initiate this discussion. ... My focus is dialogue, interests, issues, but sometimes I may not visualise what women's interests are. ... I will consider these issues during the talks on missing persons and war damages; we should focus on women's issues then.¹¹⁸

But the time to "work on the issues of women", or rather the issues that women consider priorities, never came. Moreover, the fact that war damage and missing persons have affected women and men's lives quite differently was under-considered. While Tahiri would continue to lead the Technical Dialogue with Serbia until 2017, time would tell that Tahiri rarely was able to use her position to advocate issues important to women. Edi Gusia, Chief Executive Officer of the Agency for Gender Equality (AGE) in the Office of the Prime Minister, observed in 2020:

If we look at the region in general, Kosovo is in some way a leader regarding the presence of women in peace processes, like Edita Tahiri. But it was important that in that negotiation process the issue of survivors of sexual violence would be discussed. Also, the issue of missing persons is important, remaining one of the key points to be discussed in the Dialogue. These issues must be raised because we owe it to the men and women of Kosovo.¹¹⁹

Part of the problem for Rogova, among other activists interviewed, was that Tahiri did not consult enough with diverse women and women's rights groups to hear their concerns and then push for those issues to be discussed during the Dialogue. "Edita was leading the process, but she was not actually representing the needs of Kosovo women or a feminist perspective in the Dialogue", Zana Hoxha, Executive Director of Artpolis, said.¹²⁰

Meanwhile, some participants observed that the nature of the Dialogue made it difficult for Tahiri to raise issues important to women. “Yes, we had Edita Tahiri, but back then the question was raised [about including other issues], and because [the Dialogue] was considered at a technical level, ... it was a bit difficult to include women’s interests,” said Yllka Soba.¹²¹ Tahiri explained in 2020:

At the beginning of the talks, before the agenda was set, as Kosovo, we presented our demands to the European Union, and Serbia also presented its demands. Those demands included the war reparations within the framework of which were the missing, raped women, compensation for murders, physical damage, and spiritual and cultural damage to Kosovo and the Albanian population. I presented these in Brussels. When we agreed on which requests to put on the agenda, it had to be agreed upon by the parties, because the request of one party did not become an agenda [item] without the consent of the other party. It is the same: Serbia also had some kind of request, but no agenda was made because we did not accept it. We agreed on the issues of the missing. We talked in a round of talks. I had with me the state delegation for the missing. Only once was this issue discussed. Never again. We asked for the opening of the state military archives of Serbia to extract the remaining names because then, in 2011, there were 1,800 to 1,900 missing [persons]. When we asked for data, Serbia never presented it. It always avoided presenting it, and when the European Union failed to force it in some way, this topic went aside. [W]hen we asked the EU, it said, “Serbia is not cooperating, and we cannot force it”. Because the EU did not have strong mechanisms like NATO had in Rambouillet. The EU has taken soft measures, such as the conditionality of integration [into the EU]. But the non-cooperation of

Serbia on important issues has led Kosovars to seek the establishment of the 35th chapter. Each country has 34 [chapters to join the EU, but] Serbia has 35 chapters. This [last] chapter deals with the non-implementation of that part of the agreement [with Kosovo, including] the issue of the missing.¹²²

Thus, Tahiri said that she raised issues important to women, like resolving the issue of missing persons but that these have not yet been addressed. Meanwhile, the fact that both parties had to agree to points on the agenda meant that some issues important to women, like reparations for survivors of sexual violence, were not discussed.

In 2017, Tahiri's mandate ended, and no longer were any women represented directly in the Dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia. Moreover, the share of women in working groups has been quite low. Of 90 people engaged in working groups between 2011 and 2017, only 16 percent were women.¹²³ This was recurrently highlighted in interviews as a failure to implement Resolution 1325. As Thais Santa Cruz reflected:

The first thing that comes into my mind is the all-male delegation that was established to conduct the Dialogue process between Pristina and Belgrade in December 2018. Nine men and not a single woman! While there have been a couple of emblematic cases in which women have been at the centre of negotiations, such as Edita Tahiri, this remains the exception and not the rule. And women in Kosovo continue to be excluded when it comes to high-level negotiation processes. Fast-forward to 4 September 2020, when the economic commitments "to move forward with economic normalisation" were signed between Pristina and Belgrade in the presence of the U.S. President [Trump]. Not a single woman was present. Nor were

women's roles in peacebuilding addressed in the two-page document.¹²⁴

Charle Cuellar had a similar perspective:

I would say that women's representation, including women's representation in international negotiations for Kosovo is really not a success story. The fact is that every single opportunity that Kosovo has had to be represented internationally or to form a government, [the government has] failed to represent women. Kosovo is full of competent, prepared, professional women ready to fight for a space in decision-making, but they have not been allowed. Despite laws and policy commitments, we did not achieve what we would like to see in Kosovo in terms of women's representation.¹²⁵

"FROM THE MARGINS TO THE FRONTLINE"

"This marginalisation upset us women, especially us in politics and civil society leadership. So, we were of course thinking of strategies for bringing women from the margins to the frontline."

- Edita Tahiri, Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Policy and National Security, 2011

"I can tell you a story of how we got a quota," said Tahiri, referring to the fact that Kosovo electoral laws reserve 30 percent of parliamentary and municipal assembly seats for the under-represented gender, women or men:

After the war there was the tendency of marginalising women from politics despite the fact that women in Kosovo were highly involved in the process of liberation, independence, and democracy. This marginalisation upset us women, especially us in politics and civil society leadership. So, we were of course thinking of strategies for bringing women from the margins to the frontline. And this is how we started to advocate for the quota for women. Women politicians and in civil society, our goal was common: empowering women starting from the Parliament.

At that time, the breakthrough happened in a very strange way. We were talking to political parties in Kosovo, but also to UNMIK, the international administration in Kosovo, who didn't bring a model of

women's involvement because they were also mostly men.

Until the first local elections were held, there were municipal leaderships. However, they were based more on self-appointment than any procedure. So, I initiated procedures in the Municipality of Pristina for choosing the mayor until the elections. My proposal was that the Council of Political Parties, including branches of the central leaderships of political parties, gather and vote for the mayor. It was not all democratic, but it was better than a self-appointed mayor. In that formula, which at that time I convinced UNMIK to apply in Pristina, I was a LDK candidate. There were other candidates from other parties like the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK). I won.

But the UNMIK Chief, Kouchner, was not ready to implement this. The reason was that there was a competition between the LDK and the ex-armed resistance [which had become the PDK]. And because we as LDK won, he said, "I cannot implement this decision because if the ex-KLA or the PDK are upset, then they might not want to be part of the elections." Instead, Kouchner proposed a compromise formula of having co-mayors: one from LDK and one from PDK. I refused this proposal as absurd and undemocratic. So, because of stability, Kouchner didn't implement my position as the Mayor of Pristina Municipality, although I won the support of the majority of political parties. ...

So, women were critical of Kouchner. He could not even appear publicly in those days. Whenever he was in public speeches or debates, women would criticise him. And one day he came to me and said, "I cannot bear this pressure which comes from Kosovar women anymore."

And I said, "Well, I think that women do legitimate things."

Then he said, "What can I do for women, so to be able to have some peace with women in Kosovo, not to be criticised?"

I said to him, "Well you have a chance to support our quota of 30 percent. If UNMIK supports it, so will political parties. Here we can have women as 30 percent in municipal assemblies and the Parliament."

We agreed to organise an international conference in Kosovo, and Kouchner and I were the keynote speakers. It was an international conference of women in politics. The conference happened and women from different political and civil society organisations participated. The main conclusion was support for the 30 percent quota for women.

After these conclusions Kouchner was very active so the quota became part of the law. At that time UNMIK was the one that issued the law.

For me, this is a very interesting story. ... Because Kouchner harmed us in Pristina Municipality by opposing my nomination, he wanted to compensate, or he wanted to really show women in Kosovo that he was not against women's participation. That was how we achieved this quota.

I have to add that there was a lot of misinterpretation about who launched the quota. There was sometimes the view that the quota was an idea of the internationals. I have to say that the quota was our idea because we were looking for ways to come back from the margins to the frontline.¹²⁶

The quota requires that at least 30 percent of the candidates on political party lists during elections are women. Towards gender equality it also stipulates that at least 30 percent of the candidates must be men. The quota enabled women to secure 30 percent of the seats in the municipal assemblies and later in the Parliament.¹²⁷ The positive impact of this measure on the "increased representation and

meaningful participation of women in national and local governance” was evident.¹²⁸ Women secured only eight percent of the seats in the first municipal elections in 2000, but the quota guaranteed 30 percent in future elections.¹²⁹ Later, the Law on Gender Equality (2004) would call for women and men to each hold at least 40 percent of positions at all decision-making levels, but this was not implemented in practice.

Increasing women’s participation at every level of politics is crucial, but insufficient for democracy and bringing diverse women’s voices into decision-making. The Kosovo Women’s Lobby, an *ad hoc* group uniting women in civil society and politics around issues of common concern, joined the broader Reforma 2004 Coalition in recommending changes to the electoral system in 2003.¹³⁰ They wanted to address critiques that the quota “can bring numbers but not always quality” as it would enable voters to vote for their preferred candidates among multiple choices, Tahiri said.¹³¹ They believed that an open list electoral system, where voters selected candidates by name rather than party, would enable citizens to elect and hold accountable individual women. While advocacy efforts did not succeed in time for the 2004 elections, an open list electoral system was introduced in 2007. This enabled measurement of the extent to which voters elected women by name recognition and performance versus whether women received seats thanks to the quota. In 2007, 43 percent of the women in Parliament were elected by name recognition and 37 percent in 2010.¹³²

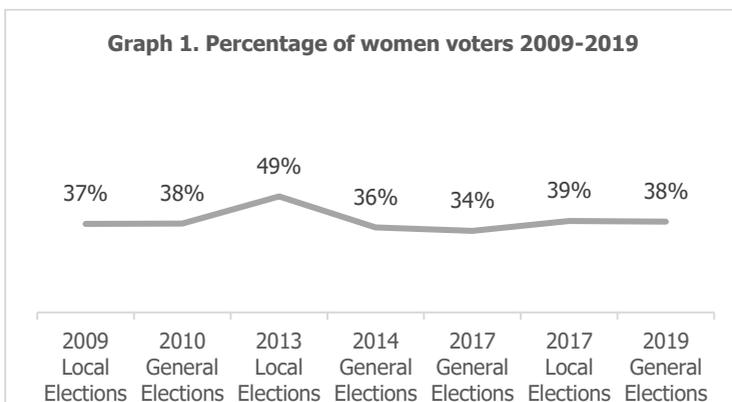
By 2011, the quota was under threat with pressure from the EC. The EC’s representative on the Kosovo Election Commission stated that the quota was “undemocratic.” In return, women’s rights activists questioned whether having a primarily male Parliament would be democratic. “I don’t think political leaders in Kosovo would give places to women if it wasn’t for the quota,” Rogova said:

In the last meeting when we discussed the electoral system some parliamentarians said, “We don’t need

quotas.” They didn’t realise how easily they got into the Parliament because of the quota. I said, “Without the quota you would not be able to touch the threshold of the Parliament doors with your foot.”¹³³

The quota also had advocates among men. Former Police General Director turned parliamentarian Behar Selimi aptly stated, “The quota is needed until the mentality that we need women represented is reached.”¹³⁴

In 2015, the new Law on Gender Equality defined equal participation as women and men’s 50 percent representation in all decision-making positions. However, the electoral laws have remained unchanged, retaining the 30 percent quota. Unfortunately, political parties have selected to follow the electoral laws rather than the Law on Gender Equality. Thus, as per the UN Secretary-General’s indicators on women’s participation as candidates in elections,¹³⁵ in the 2010 general elections, women comprised only 33.6 percent of candidates,¹³⁶ and this fell to 34 percent of candidates in the 2017 general elections,¹³⁷ and only 32 percent in 2019.¹³⁸ Meanwhile, except for the 2013 local elections, the percentage of voters who were women remained consistently lower than men (see Graph 1).¹³⁹



The quota, taken alone, has not guaranteed women's "meaningful participation" in various levels of decision-making.¹⁴⁰ As of 2020, only one woman had ever served as mayor. Despite the decentralisation process, the "old boys' network" receives directives from political party leaders sitting in Pristina. Political parties tend to remain male-dominated and centralised.¹⁴¹ According to women's rights activist Sevdije Ahmeti, male political party leaders played the role of puppeteers in decision-making processes. "Women are married to political parties. They dance the way the political party leader pulls the string. No one saw it necessary to implement 1325 or CEDAW."¹⁴² She believed women were used merely as "puppets," instruments to voice the opinions of men.

Even if not all women parliamentarians were "puppets," they did struggle to make their voices heard. MP Donika Kadaj from the Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK) political party recalled:

[During a meeting with my colleagues,] I sneezed, and nobody said, "Bless you." As a joke I said, "Bless you," to myself.

And my colleague replied, "You're a woman, and you must sneeze three times for someone to say, bless you." It confirmed what women have been saying all the time: we must work and perform three times better just to be considered equal.¹⁴³

MP Teuta Sahatqija, the former head of ORA party and a three-term parliamentarian, agreed:

If there is no strong woman within the structure [of a party] this shows that without affirmative measures women cannot compete equally with men for positions. Their foundation is simply not the same. It is like having a man start off from floor twenty of a building whilst the woman has to start from the ground floor.

...

Primarily, when a woman speaks, there will be two to three times more attention paid to her appearance, than to her words, her text. There will be sarcastic smiles by men. In the beginning, women have to be very strong when it comes to speaking out about a subject whilst men have a blank check handed to them.¹⁴⁴

The fact that women face added challenges compared to men in order to enter politics was a recurring theme among the women politicians interviewed in 2020. This included threats and attacks. Mimoza Kusari-Lila, then the only woman to have served as a mayor in Kosovo, said that when she was running for the position of Mayor of Gjakova: "I even remember [male politicians] saying that we [will] scare [her] with a firecracker! The argument of force usually comes to discussion."¹⁴⁵ Parliamentarian and later President of Kosovo, Vjosa Osmani, observed that women politicians must survive amid a "mentality of muscles":

Being in decision-making positions in our country, but also in the whole region where the patriarchal mentality dominates, continues to remain challenging. Women in decision-making positions face many prejudices, attacks, and obstacles, both personally and professionally. I am not excluded from the obstacle of such attacks either, and, unfortunately this also applies to other female colleagues in decision-making positions. I will not specify a case, because each case has equal weight, as long as it occurs as a result of a muscle mentality. [S]uch attacks and challenges have the sole purpose of denigrating and subjugating women. What we must never allow is not to support each other in this battle, while working in parallel for awareness and emancipation of society as a whole.

That most decisions continued to be made within political parties and that parties have tended to be led by men has limited women's "meaningful" participation in decision-making processes.¹⁴⁶ As women's rights activist Demolli observed:

Political parties in Kosovo and the leadership in general are still patriarchal in the way they govern. Political parties are not democratised enough, and it has allowed patriarchy to go into institutions. This is the [main] obstacle.¹⁴⁷

The quota has not necessarily ensured the "representation" of diverse women's interests within decision-making processes either. The interests of Roma women, for example, have been largely ignored, according to Roma women's rights activist Shpresa Agushi from the Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian Women's Network (RROGRAEK):

Unequal and insufficient participation of Roma women in decision-making positions at the local and national government levels have impacted the exclusion of issues faced by Roma women in Kosovo laws and in political developments, economic and social. This happens because some governmental institutions and international institutions in Kosovo do not include women of all ethnic groups in Kosovo, and, in particular, they do not involve Roma women. ... There are no relations of cooperation between Roma women NGOs and the Assembly, ministries of Kosovo, and UNMIK in order to transmit the worries and the proposals of Roma women and girls.¹⁴⁸

Montenegrin women's rights activist Snežana Karadžić said ethnic minority women generally faced added obstacles to participating in decision-making processes.¹⁴⁹ "I have a lot of barricades," she said. "More or less, we are all alone."

Meanwhile, Resmije Rahmani, a women's rights activist with disabilities from the Organisation for Persons with Muscular Dystrophy of Kosovo (OPDMK) noted that the quota provides little help for women, let alone women with disabilities, to become involved, particularly amid a male-dominated environment:

[W]e have seen a lot of hesitation to get involved in politics or decision-making and [to] lobby for other women. There are many doubts. We know that the number of women in politics is already low, and we are aware of the obstacles they face and the lack of support they receive from their male colleagues. Moreover, they are far from supporting each other. This is why many women and girls with disabilities even refuse to get involved in politics.¹⁵⁰

No instance of a woman with disabilities holding a parliamentary seat could be identified.

In addition, "Not necessarily every woman is a champion of women's rights," said Theodora Krumova, a former OSCE gender focal point.

"There were times in which women have not differentiated between the party and their position as women," Sahatqija acknowledged.¹⁵¹ "This means that, at that time, the party was a priority because it was the time of state-building and [working towards] the independence of Kosovo." Nationhood was seen as the primary focus and gender equality as a separate and secondary issue, rather than something to be considered throughout Kosovo's state-building process. A recurring critique, particularly in 2011, was the limited extent to which women parliamentarians brought issues facing women into political debates.

"In the beginning," Macula, formerly of UN Women, recalled, "When we started to work with women politicians to make them more outspoken and train them, some of them used to say, 'We have friends in the party. They will not let us

down!’”¹⁵² Women tended to believe that men in their party would defend women’s interests. Only with time did they begin to speak up regarding women’s priorities.

Establishing a critical mass of women can be crucial for bringing about change, as former UNDP Resident Representative Osnat Lubrani said:

When women find themselves as the token women among a majority of men, they are under greater pressure to adopt the same perspective or approach of the majority. In countries like Norway, where women constitute a critical mass of decision-makers, women are more confident to champion gender and other issues that are of particular concern to women. Having the balance between perspectives of both women and men is so very important.¹⁵³

Establishing a critical mass of women is important for ensuring that women’s voices are heard in decision-making processes.

Towards this end, women parliamentarians have initiated efforts to rejuvenate the Women’s Caucus. Initially established in 2005, women parliamentarians sometimes clashed due to differing political party interests. Competition among women also posed obstacles to joint advocacy. “The worst part is that women are still very harmful to each other,” said Agushi.¹⁵⁴ “We’re censoring ourselves.” Rexhaj agreed, “Women are often attacked by women.”¹⁵⁵

Women put aside their differences, uniting in early 2011 and giving the Women’s Caucus a new name: the Group of Women Deputies of Kosovo. By 2011 hopes ran high that women might tip-toe across party lines to address issues of common concern to all women. “Unity among us is also a weapon,” commented MP Kadaj. “We are the largest group in the Parliament. We invite a number of women to this group, and they come regardless of their party and ethnicity. ... Our main theme and agenda focus on creating a space or sensitive legislative package in relation to gender.”¹⁵⁶ During the last

decade, they have continued working towards these shared aims.¹⁵⁷

The Group of Women Deputies forged a plan with various topics and a strategy, according to which a member must raise an issue impacting women in every parliamentary session.¹⁵⁸ To date, women have raised issues such as women's involvement in Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK), girls' access to education, the Labour Law, protection against cancer, the insufficient number of women ambassadors appointed, the masculinised naming of schools and roads, recognition of survivors of sexual violence, criminalisation of gender-based violence, and inclusion of attention to gender equality within the civil code.¹⁵⁹

Women have had some impact, according to Kadaj. Since "many of the parliamentary groups have men speaking officially to the media, it seems that it is mostly the work of men," she said. "However, if you read the transcripts of the work done in the committees you will see that in that aspect a greater volume of quality work is done by women."

Perhaps voters have acknowledged this, as the number of women directly elected to the Assembly of Kosovo also has grown in recent years. Women who initially gained seats thanks to the quota, later obtained the needed popular votes. In the 2019 elections, 26 of 39 (67 percent) women in the Assembly of Kosovo entered without the quota, compared to only 16 of 37 in 2007 (35 percent).¹⁶⁰ As Osmani emphasised during the annual Week of Women organised by the National Democratic Institute:

We as women have to understand that all of us having these seats in decision making is not enough. It is not about just being present. It is about making sure that our voice is heard, so we are not just a number somewhere. It is very important that we use that opportunity to resolve the problems that our citizens are dealing with. And I think women in Kosovo, in the Parliament and elsewhere and in the office of the

President are showing exactly that, that we bring quality, we resolve problems, we contribute to resolving issues that deal with everyday life of the citizens in much higher quality than many other men in politics. This needs to be recognised and we need to say it out loud, because only this way we build the path for other women that will come to leadership positions in the future and do extraordinary work.¹⁶¹

Another factor contributing to empowering women's participation in parliament, as well as in municipal assemblies, has been the Kosovo Lobby for Gender Equality and several outspoken campaigns undertaken by women in civil society, encouraging the election of more women to politics. Rogova recalled that when the Lobby first started, "Young women in political parties refused to go to debates. There were women Assembly members who never said a word." With support and empowerment from other women, many women have become vocal advocates within municipal assemblies as well, and some have run for office in the parliament. As Kusari-Lila recently recalled: "I started the first journey toward gender equality with the invitation of Igballe Rogova (Igo), two decades ago, in 2002."¹⁶² The behind-the-scenes empowerment of women in late night phone calls, social media messaging, and solidarity in trouble-shooting remains seldom seen and often unsung, aside from the very public results of women's enhanced participation in multiple levels of politics.

In 2011, Atifete Jahjaga was appointed the first woman President of Kosovo, shattering stereotypes and "setting an example in the region." Jahjaga's position as President exemplified progress in terms of women's political participation.¹⁶³ "Now we have a female president, first in the region. We have two deputy prime ministers. We have three women in the ... cabinet of ministers," Qosaj Mustafa listed women's accomplishments in securing decision-making positions as of 2011 (see Table 3).¹⁶⁴

Table 3. Women in Decision-making Positions in Kosovo

Position	2011		2020	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Presidents	1 17%	5 83%	2 29%	5 81%
Prime Ministers	0 0%	6 100%	0 0%	9 100%
Deputy Prime Ministers	2 33%	4 67%	5 20%	20 80%
Ministers	2 11%	17 89%	16 15%	91 85%
Prime Minister's Office	46 ¹⁶⁵ 31%	102 69%	43 27%	117 ¹⁶⁶ 73%
Deputy Ministers	0 0%	33 100%		
Foreign missions	13 18%	59 72%	274 26%	797 74%
All institutions (in 2007)	6,013 37%	10,711 63%		

While the President served as a positive image of a woman in a leadership position, her ability to ensure that the needs and interests of women in Kosovo would be addressed was limited by the political system, said Qosaj Mustafa, who served as the President's Political Advisor for Legal Affairs. "The presidency depends on the mandate, meaning on the parliamentary system," she commented. "This means that our actions are limited regarding the function of institutions and the proclamation of laws. Any law that we disapprove of can still go through even without our consent. And the executive branch is greatly underrepresented by women. Until we have a change in the philosophy, in the mindset of these political leaders, not much will change," she concluded.

President Jahjaga did use her mandate to raise and address the needs of survivors of sexual violence perpetrated during the war. She worked closely with women's rights groups possessing expertise on this issue to establish the National Council for Survivors of Sexual Violence during the War, which

supported the adoption of the Law recognising and allocating state benefits for survivors. She also initiated the establishment of the National Commission for Verification and Recognition of the Status of the Victims of the Sexual Violence during Wartime and championed this cause internationally.¹⁶⁷

Overall, women continue to move from the margins to the centre, with more women participating in decision-making processes in 2020 than in 2011, or in 2000. The enactment of the quota, the appointment of a woman President, the positioning of Edita Tahiri as chief negotiator, the engagement of Vjosa Osmani as acting President (and later President), women's attainment of other high-level positions, and slowly shifting perceptions of women politicians are all signs of positive change. The rejuvenation of the Group of Women Deputies is another positive step towards representing issues of importance to women within decision-making processes. Women have used Resolution 1325 to assert themselves in the political arena. They have contributed the Resolution's implementation through their lobbying and sheer determination to infuse life into this written document. As Tahiri reflected in 2020:

If we look back over the last 20 years of the implementation of Resolution 1325, I can say that there have been achievements in some areas and at some levels of implementation, but I think it has been a very slow process, and, most notably, it has not been substantial in the sense of providing sustainable empowerment for women. We have seen empowerment. However, there have been rising and falling trends. This has especially happened in the field of governance. We have managed to bring women in the Parliament through the quota. Although an artificial mechanism, we have offered the opportunity for them to gain political experience, political capacity, which is bringing more women into government. However,

when it comes to governance, the main problem has always been instability.¹⁶⁸

Kosovo institutions: mainstreaming or “side- streaming” gender?

“Overall, there is lack of government and political willingness. Even though they have AGE, they don’t mainstream [but rather] side stream gender.”

- Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, 2020

The Constitution of Kosovo considers gender equality a fundamental value and participation is one of its more evident manifestations. It incorporates the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The 2004 Law on Gender Equality called for “equal opportunities for both female and male participation in the political, economical, social, cultural and other fields of social life.”¹⁶⁹ Thus, the Assembly of Kosovo, civil service, Judicial Council, and Constitutional Court, among others, must ensure respect for the principles of gender equality. The topics addressed in the initial Law on Gender Equality were extensive, leading some to see it more as a wish list than an implementable law.

The Law considered gender equality requirements to have been met when male and female participation reaches 40 percent within all institutions and at all levels of authority.¹⁷⁰ Forty versus 60 percent hardly seemed equal. However, it was an impressive goal considering that, of the EU member states that have quotas, these generally range between 30 and 50 percent.¹⁷¹ The Law also stipulated that gender equality be considered in the naming of institutions, public undertakings,

and roads.¹⁷² It required all public and private institutions to provide equal employment opportunities for women and men. Following extensive advocacy on behalf of women's rights activists, the Law also established the Agency for Gender Equality (AGE) within the Prime Minister's Office, theoretically at the highest possible level.

AGE was created in 2005 to implement and monitor the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality, promote policies towards gender equality, propose research on gender equality issues, and work to increase gender equality awareness, among other tasks.¹⁷³ Mehdi Geci described his duties at the AGE in 2007:

I have to participate in all laws that have to do with human rights and gender equality. We participate in working groups; we prepare comments, suggestions, and recommendations. Also, we are obligated to participate in all parliamentary commissions and to be active by giving our suggestions and recommendations according to that law.¹⁷⁴

He faced challenges, however. AGE has been under-resourced. "The first obstacle is the small number of people who work in this Agency," he said. "Now we face a lack of capacity." The shortcomings back then, in 2007, were apparent to Rexhaj: "We expected much more from this institution ... but there were not qualified people." She added, "Officials for gender equality in Pristina don't cooperate with us as much as they should. We have some kind of collaboration, but they don't take initiative for implementing the Resolution or laws."¹⁷⁵ In 2007, Vuniqi agreed:

It's unbelievable: they do not understand their role and civil society's role. They are organising, for example, roundtables and activities that women's organisations should do. They are supposed to create policies, to help women's organisations in their work,

and to monitor the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality, Anti-discrimination Law, and so on. ... I understand that they have so little power, so little support, budget, staff, and very low capacities.¹⁷⁶

In 2007, research participants expressed concern that although it is supposed to be an independent agency, AGE was exposed to political interference. The appointment of a permanent Chief Executive Officer took six years. The candidate finally selected in 2011, a politician's relative, was too inexperienced to push for the implementation of the ambitious Law on Gender Equality, women's rights activists felt. Municipal gender equality officers and gender focal points appointed within ministries and municipalities also seemed to lack knowledge, sufficient financing, and political clout to further gender equality.¹⁷⁷

"A big mistake was to think that gender equality is achieved by merely establishing an Agency for Gender Equality," said Besim M. Kajtazi, Head of the Department of Human Rights in the Office of the Prime Minister, in 2011. Rautio agreed, "I hope the gender machinery gets stronger because it was not working effectively. It was fragmented and seemed marginal."

Despite the long list of criticisms heard back in 2010, AGE's list of achievements has grown with time. In recent years, these have corresponded with the appointment of a knowledgeable and capable Chief Executive Officer, Edi Gusia. Some of AGE's many efforts have included collaborating with KWN to conduct regular research and monitoring on domestic violence in 2008 (also with UNDP), 2015, and 2020. Utilising this evidence and engaging a diverse array of stakeholders, including civil society experts, in working groups to draft the new Law on Protection against Domestic Violence and two national strategies and action plans to address domestic violence. Together with the Ministry of Justice, they established a monitoring mechanism, the National Coordinator for Protection against Domestic Violence. Together with the

Kosovo Cadastral Agency, AGE introduced an affirmative measure releasing spouses from fees if they registered their property in the names of both spouses. AGE has cooperated with the Statistical Office of Kosovo (SOK), later the Kosovo Agency of Statistics, to publish gender-disaggregated data; and financed research on the use of light weapons in Kosovo.

In 2015, AGE led the process of amending the Law on Gender Equality, which involved a consultative process based on lessons learned from the first Law. The new Law requires gender mainstreaming of all policies, documents, and legislation; gender-responsive budgeting; and that selection, recruitment, and appointment processes, including for leading positions, ensure equal representation of women and men, defined as 50 percent.¹⁷⁸ AGE has led the drafting of Programs for Gender Equality and action plans based on the legal framework and involving very consultative processes.

Specifically related to implementing Resolution 1325, Gusia recalled:

In 2013, AGE with support from UN Women drafted the first Action Plan for the Implementation of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. It was a two-year action plan. Two monitoring reports were developed, and for the first time a strategy aimed at advancing gender equality has been financed by the Government of Kosovo at the level of 51 percent. Also, the level of implementation of the activities of this action plan has achieved 79 percent ... which is a great achievement. Therefore, we can consider it as something positive in the construction of the state of Kosovo after 2008. Moreover, the principles of 1325 have been incorporated, which proves the will of the institutions to consistently implement Resolution 1325.¹⁷⁹

While the Action Plan on Resolution 1325 expired in 2015, Resolution 1325 was mentioned in Kosovo's Program for Gender Equality.¹⁸⁰

In 2020, AGE marked its 15th Anniversary, during which Rogova praised its work: "AGE is one of three key factors in the cooperation towards achieving gender equality in Kosovo, together with donors and women's organisations".¹⁸¹

Amid the many achievements, some activists expressed concern that the Government still does not consider gender equality a priority and has not allocated adequate financing for implementing the Kosovo Program on Gender Equality. As Qosaj Mustafa observed in 2020:

Women's NGOs have been pushing a lot and utilising 1325. And I have seen it also in the Government. We have AGE ... but this has not necessarily been followed through with implementation. And the challenge has been, I think, overall, in the last decade in Kosovo the tendency to draft a lot of action plans but not following through with actions and budget ... Not that we have now an action plan on 1325, which I think is a big gap for Kosovo still. We do have a chapter on Women, Peace, and Security. I was a local consultant with AGE to draft it as part of the Kosovo Program on Gender Equality, ... which is reflective to some extent of 1325, and we did use 1325 when drafting the [P]rogram. But we would need an action plan also on 1325 because it would be more specific and more precise.

Overall, there is a lack of government and political willingness. Even though they have AGE, they don't mainstream [but rather] side stream gender. AGE is there. They will draft this action plan. They will ... oversee the monitoring. But when you don't put resources there to implement it [it won't be implemented] ... and I think the overall problem is usually relying just on donors. I think that then, definitely, we are not showing that there is a political

willingness to push forward implementation. Also, I think that sometimes there is also this idea that Kosovo still is not part of the UN, and they say, "But why should we be worrying about 1325? Because this is a UN document, and Kosovo is still not a part of the UN."¹⁸²

Thus, inadequate budget allocations for implementing Resolution 1325, as well as furthering gender equality more broadly, and the affiliated insufficient political will remain key challenges.

Nevertheless, the fact that AGE exists, at the highest possible decision-making level within the Office of the Prime Minister, and has grown in strength with time, was a recurrently mentioned success. As Charle Cuellar summarised:

Although we cannot say that the Government of Kosovo has the implementation of Resolution 1325 as a priority in their political agenda, something has been done. There is a gender equality agency placed within the Office of the Prime Minister in accordance with international best practices. We also have gender officers in different ministries and municipalities. The structure of the gender machinery has not been questioned by any government. This shows that some importance is placed on advancing gender equality. However, when the moment to take gender transformative decisions in line with the Resolution arrives, successive Kosovo governments have had to be pushed, most of the time by women's civil society organisations and/or international organisations. Their [government] ownership in implementing the Resolution is questionable.¹⁸³

Security: “It’s a man’s world”

“[Security is] a male dominated system. Pushing to have a woman involved in the National Security Council, Edita, is an ongoing process for me. I worked on it for three years. Even from the international community I didn’t get a clear answer. I started talking about national security legislation. No one would talk to me because it’s ‘men’s work’, like that song, ‘It’s a Man’s World’.”

- Arjeta Rexhaj, Political Advisor to Deputy Prime Minister Edita Tahiri, 2011

Policemen whispered to each other in the locker room. Atifete Jahjaga had just been promoted to the position of General Major. She was the first woman in Kosovo to hold such a high position within the Kosovo Police. Her male colleagues grumbled, ignoring her decade of service, the fact that she passed all the tests, and climbed her way up the ladder from officer to major to colonel and eventually General Major.

“I had no idea about this gender implementation thing,” former Police General Director Behar Selimi commented years later. “These two women, [Flora Macula and Igballe Rogova], told me about it and then we started pushing together for greater gender parity and gender mainstreaming within the police.” Drawing from his newfound knowledge, Selimi later pushed for his counterparts in the police to promote a woman who had the same knowledge. “She passed all the exams,” Selimi told his colleagues. “She’s very hard-working. Why doesn’t she receive the same promotion as I?”

Eventually other police officials caved in, without any logical justification otherwise. But the locker room gossip

continued with unfounded tirades as policemen struggled to justify how a woman could be promoted to such a position.

Not only would General Major Atifete Jahjaga move on to develop the five-year strategy for the Kosovo Police together with her colleague Lieutenant Tahire Haxholli, but she would eventually serve her country as the first woman President, not only in Kosovo, but the region.

Towards strengthening the physical security and safety of women and girls, women's equal participation in the justice, security, and Foreign Service sectors, is crucial.¹⁸⁴ Women's involvement in these sectors, the UN Secretary-General writes, can serve as "a proxy for the responsiveness of justice, security and foreign service sector actors to women's concerns." Equal participation is not only about equal opportunities for qualified women to fill these positions, but also about obtaining better results due to their involvement. Having more women present allows for gender mainstreaming to be furthered. In some instances, women can provide a secure environment for other women to speak out about crimes, Hysni Shala, former Kosovo Police Sergeant and Coordinator of Human Rights said in 2011:

Kosovo's citizens have different requirements based on gender. When the victim is a woman, we expect the person who treats her to be a woman too. We had cases in which a policewoman received information from someone that a man would not have received. Even children find it easier to communicate with women than men.¹⁸⁵

The presence of women in the security sector adds an element of sensitivity, as women may be better able to "feel for the victim," he said. Employing women in security sectors proves invaluable when responding to the specific security needs of women and girls or ensuring their fair treatment. Women can widen narrow understandings of gender issues and shed light on women's security concerns, allowing for a more equal participation in society by women and girls. Even so,

institutions have struggled to ensure women's equal participation in sectors historically seen as "a man's world". "The profession of policeman is perceived as a masculine position and more as a force than a service," said Shala in 2011. "This mentality is not only present here in Kosovo but everywhere [in the world]."¹⁸⁶

Indeed, some research participants blamed UNMIK personnel for transporting from their own countries into Kosovo a poor example of women's inclusion in security forces. Former General Director Selimi recalled policemen arguing against proposed policies towards gender equality, stating, "even UNMIK did not have this many women."¹⁸⁷ Selimi shared his experience:

All obstacles in implementing Resolution 1325 come from a culture of male resistance, which is not only local but also international. [This is] a male resistant culture to the participation of women in security positions or security services: military, police, and other agencies that implement law and order. This culture didn't impress me so much. I had my opinion about the internationals. I never thought that they were the most qualified from around the world, but I still expected them to be more cooperative, more committed to build the philosophy of gender equality, particularly Resolution 1325. Being in Kosovo, they are obliged to implement that Resolution because it has to do with international peacekeeping missions. This was an obstacle because we expected the international police would offer a good example of implementing Resolution 1325. We didn't find any good example. Still, in their police force there are no women in strategic positions. This was an obstacle because we didn't have something on which we could base the new police force. In the meantime, we didn't have legislation to make this Resolution mandatory.

And international staff didn't know what Resolution 1325 was. ... Only the present police commissioner knew because he used to work in the panel for reviewing peacekeeping missions in the world. ... We tried to suggest, continuously starting from the UNMIK SRSG, to start training on Resolution 1325 for all their staff, police chiefs, military chiefs, and mechanisms they used to establish state order. But absolutely they were surprised, "What is this Resolution 1325?" And they said, "What is wrong with this Behar who is insisting on this issue?" Even internationals were surprised that I was doing this job in the name of equality.

The efforts of Selimi, Shala, Jahjaga, Haxholli, and other advocates of gender equality led to progress within the Kosovo Police, including the introduction of measures towards protecting women's and girls' human rights.¹⁸⁸ This included establishing an Advisor for Gender Issues within its administrative structure, a Committee for Gender Equality with 100 regional gender advisors, an action plan for incorporating gender in all fields, specialised regional units for anti-trafficking and domestic violence, Standard Operating Procedures for both trafficking and domestic violence cases, and policies towards furthering women's participation at all ranks.¹⁸⁹

Following their efforts, coupled with support from UNIFEM and OSCE to recruit more women into the police, the percentage of women participating in different police ranks increased slightly with time, including colonels, majors, security officers, and civil staff. In 2011, women served as regional commander, colonel, leader of the recruitment department, and chief of a directorate.¹⁹⁰

"We are not discriminated against [in the aspect of ranking]," Haxholli said in 2020:

There are rules within the police and there are many documents that create conditions for promotion. The

call for application opens, and those applicants who meet the criteria go to tests, and so women are promoting themselves to higher ranks. ... There was some hesitation [from women] but we pushed them to apply for promotion and helped them during the process. The result has been great and the number of women who have applied has risen throughout the ranks.¹⁹¹

Vlora Tuzi Nushi, Head of UN Women in Kosovo, considered that the Kosovo Police had made some of the greatest achievements in implementing Resolution 1325 in Kosovo:

I was positively surprised that there was an affirmative measure being applied in the Police through a quota to accept at least 30 percent of the applications to become cadets from women applicants. Their curricula are also in accordance with Resolution 1325 and the advancement of gender equality within the police.¹⁹²

Women's rights activist Demolli similarly observed:

Involvement of women in the police has been a priority, ... and we have been an example in the region. [However] in terms of implementing Resolution 1325, we were better in the first 10 years than now. For example, in the police and KPC, there were more women before. [T]he willingness of women to be involved in this sector is not as it was before. [W]omen are reluctant to be part of sectors typically for men. [In the past] the involvement of women in the security sector was promoted more than now.¹⁹³

Indeed, police have struggled to retain women. Where women once comprised 20.6 percent of the Kosovo Police in 1999, this fell to 14.7 percent in 2011 and 12.8 percent in 2020.¹⁹⁴ In all ranks but civil staff women comprised 15 percent or less of the

force. Thus, the Kosovo Police has remained far from achieving gender parity, and the situation has worsened with time.

The decrease in women's participation in the Kosovo Police has been attributed to insufficient income, change of marital status, working conditions, and poor access to information on officers' rights.¹⁹⁵ The fact that police work involves travel and women tend to have more care responsibilities at home meant that women or their families may not consider policing a suitable occupation.¹⁹⁶ Haxholli explained back in 2011:

Most policewomen have been unmarried. In the moment that they are married, they might leave due to pregnancy because maternity leave is very short.... Some are probably married outside Kosovo or married with a person who does not like this profession or does not like that women work at all. Or the husband may not like the tasks that are done by policewomen, if the woman was a wife, a mother, and has to work the night patrol. But here we have a policy: when a woman becomes pregnant, we assign another, easier task like working as administration or office staff. She who has a child one year or younger does not have to work at night, but maybe after one year she would be wanted for night patrol. If she has a jealous husband, he definitely imposes that she resigns.¹⁹⁷

Thus, in an attempt to retain women,¹⁹⁸ the Kosovo Police adopted rules making work easier on women during pregnancy, such as the potential to be transferred closer to where they live, allowing them to go home more often during the week, and generally decreasing the difficulty of their position.¹⁹⁹ Unfortunately, Shala observed that women officers did not always know about these rights:

In a research conducted by me within the Police, it turned out that a large number of women resigned

because they did not know the norms [and] rights. They did not understand whether maternity leave is a right, whether there is a right to leave in case of illness, and this has created confusion. For example, there have been cases when a police officer from Pristina got married [and moved] to Mitrovica and said that she was traveling from Mitrovica to Pristina ... and resigned [because it was too much]. She did not understand that she just needed to request a transfer. ... During this research I saw that it was often due to lack of knowledge about their rights. [So, in 2010] we compiled a summary of the laws and articles, which informed women within the Kosovo Police about their rights. When they wanted to find something, they can find all the information in that document on the Intranet. This has helped anyone who had confusion ... Now it is understood by managers that when you change residence you can transfer. Thus, the level of resignations has dropped a lot...

In the past, the Kosovo Police also conducted community outreach, trying to convince more women and their families that women have an important role to play in furthering security. Women were encouraged to apply through brochures, articles, fliers, and visits by police units that spoke with women in rural areas. "We have met with parents of women who were strong applicants and explained the contribution they would make to the preservation of the country," Haxholli said.

Another effort to empower and retain women officers has been establishing a Women's Association. Shala recalled: "Back then, in 2005 or 2006, it was Igo [Rogova] and Flora [Macula]'s idea to establish the Women's Association in the Kosovo Police."²⁰⁰ Jahjaga, among other policewomen engaged, recalled:

In 2006 and 2007 we started [working] towards the idea of establishing the Association of Women Police of Kosovo ... At that time, we faced great rejection by

male police officers in the Kosovo Police, but I also had strong support from the U.S. Embassy, and I had strong support from international mechanisms: UNMIK and EULEX, which helped the establishment of the Association. The process took a long time, and I was not part of the Police [anymore] when the Association was established. [It] had one main goal: to guarantee the stable participation of women in the Kosovo Police and the empowerment of women in decision-making within the Kosovo Police. At that time, we could count on one hand the number of women in decision-making positions in the Kosovo Police. The 15 percent quota was not applied across the ranks, not to mention the [almost non-existent] role of women in the “elite” departments within the Kosovo Police, [with male superiors] telling them: “Why would you go to the Special Unit, the Drug Unit, or something else?” That percentage was only applied in traditional positions: administration, internal investigations, but never in those areas that involve such responsibilities. The purpose of the Association has been that some issues [that we started would] continue beyond individuals. For example, there is an individual who has fought for some rights, but that individual goes, and then comes another who may not have the same approach or does not have time to deal with the same issues. The purpose was to have other institutional mechanisms that guarantee the empowerment of women within the Kosovo Police.²⁰¹

Thus, in 2012, UNIFEM (later UN Women) and women in high positions within the Kosovo Police started meeting and discussing steps towards establishing the Association.²⁰² After several workshops and discussions, the Association adopted its Statute on 23 July 2013.²⁰³ Macula, then head of UNIFEM, who supported the establishment of the Association from the

beginning, considered it one of the best examples of Resolution 1325's implementation in Kosovo:

I worked with the police and helped to integrate Resolution 1325 in the Police. As a result, the Gender Equality Board was formed, the Office for Gender Equality was established, and we created a network of the police, UNIFEM, KWN, and other organisations. Back then, we aimed to increase the number of women in the police because women would feel safer in Kosovo. In the end, I helped the establishment of the Association of Women Police in Kosovo. Within a year and a half, they were already independent. Today, they are very active, and they are a great example.²⁰⁴

Jahjaga proudly observed in 2020:

[Since 2014, the Association] is part of International Association of Women in the Police (IAWP) - Region 13, which is based in Austria and includes the region of Southeast Europe and Central Europe. Given that we were not a member country, we should have been part of some international organisations [and we were not], but at that time we went through all these challenges and made Kosovo a member of IAWP. And now we have a Kosovo [woman] police officer who is a board member of IAWP.

With support from UN Women, members of the Association have continued efforts to encourage young women to join the police and increased the visibility of women in the police through leaflets, TV spots, posters, and social media.²⁰⁵

EULEX and OSCE also invested in training and mentoring police to address domestic violence and trafficking, among other topics. The Kosovo Police also have sought to improve the approach of police, through obligatory training on gender equality. Shala recalled:

Not only this decade, but for 20 years, there was prejudice when I organised meetings, seminars, and workshops on gender issues in general. I could see from [my male colleagues'] questions that they were not yet ready or not aware enough after the trainings I organised. I received comments from male police officers like, "Why are you [as a man] organising trainings on topics for women?"²⁰⁶

However, following his and others' efforts, he has witnessed improvements in the last decade:

Today, when it comes to gender issues, the impression that they are about women already has started to fade away. [It is well-known] when it comes to gender issues that both genders must be taken into consideration. There is no division anymore, though it used to be taken that way in our country. Now it is not! Now when we talk about gender equality, we mean equal rights for men and women. [Additionally, now] every manager has realised that women should be in managerial positions too. They do not dispute it, and this shows that awareness among them has been raised. ...

Awareness among police officers about Resolution 1325 has increased. In the beginning, for example, when I started promoting this Resolution within the Kosovo Police, in most structures ... there was a dissatisfaction with this Resolution. [I]n most trainings that were held 10 years ago, Resolution 1325, which we now have incorporated in the Police Academy, was not included. Both basic and advanced training lacked inclusion in training curricula. Since then, ... we have organised special trainings ... on human rights or gender equality [and now] we dedicate part of it to international legislation [and] specific space was dedicated to 1325.

Avoiding the “hangover” in building new security institutions

"Often in post-conflict situations you're trying to re-create those security structures, which are often quite a hangover from whatever they did during the conflict. So often there is some degree of purging the old and trying to bring in the new. You're trying to overcome those stereotypes and those problems."

- Christos Theodoropoulos, Senior Protection Officer, UNHCR, 2011

With images, memorials, and statues of weapon-bearing men strewn about Kosovo and international media, the thought that women carried weapons in the conflict may not have crossed people's minds. Yet, 857 women comprised an estimated 3.3 percent of registered former Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) fighters.²⁰⁷ What happens to soldiers when the fighting ends?

Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programs seek to disarm former combatants, asking them to: "forfeit your weapon and enter 'normal life'." The UN Secretary-General calls for attention to the specific security and other needs of women ex-combatants and security actors.²⁰⁸ He proposes assessing the extent to which women and girls are included in reparation programs by examining the percentage of benefits they receive.

Immediately after the war, a few programs offered humanitarian and other transitional assistance for former KLA fighters. At least two large-scale DDR programs existed, but

they did not maintain data on the monetary equivalent of benefits that women and girls received, as proposed by the UN Secretary-General. Nor did any known efforts exist to “mitigate factors that prevent women’s and girls’ access to reparations or DDR benefits.”

For the first DDR program, UNMIK and KFOR contracted the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to facilitate the demilitarisation and reintegration of KLA ex-combatants in 1999, as called for by Resolution 1244. IOM representatives entered regions throughout Kosovo in a massive campaign to register all KLA members. IOM did not undertake any specific assessment focused on the needs of women ex-combatants. Their mandate involved providing skills training and job placement assistance to all former combatants, regardless of gender. In total, they registered 25,723 former KLA combatants, including 857 female combatants (3.3 percent). No gender-disaggregated records exist on how women benefitted specifically. Overall, 1,961 former combatants were referred for short-term employment, 2,881 for long-term employment, and 4,552 entered the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC).²⁰⁹

With only 17.7 percent of registered ex-combatants joining the KPC, thousands had to secure other livelihoods. In 2009, the UNDP KPC resettlement program assisted 1,462 women and men enrolled in transitioning to civilian life.²¹⁰ The program assisted 42 women, comprising 2.9 percent of the cases assisted. UNDP offered counselling for participants and “facilitated their difficult transition from life in uniform as a member of the KPC, to life as a civilian”.²¹¹ “The vast majority of them are now well along the path to reintegration,” UNDP reported in 2011.

With time and decreasing international aid, veterans faced increasingly dire economic conditions. “They who sacrificed themselves and were imprisoned for decades never received any awards or public recognition,” Shukrije Gashi of Partners Kosova said.²¹² “They were not granted state care or any benefits such as pensions or health insurance.” Unlike

people with special needs or the elderly, veterans were not entitled to state benefits as of 2011. "There is nothing," said Muharrem Xhemajli, President of the Organisation of Veterans of the Kosovo Liberation Army at the time.²¹³ "No benefits or anything are institutionalised for women or men veterans." This became a key rallying point for a group of veterans who camped in front of the Parliament for 61 days in 2011, demanding government attention to their plight.²¹⁴ Their demonstration became a hunger strike as they called for the adoption of the draft law on "KLA values", which would provide them with state benefits similar to those already received by war invalids and the families of persons who died during the war.²¹⁵

In December 2011, the Assembly of Kosovo adopted the Law on the Status and the Rights of the Martyrs, Invalids, Veterans, Members of Kosova Liberation Army, Civilian Victims of War and their Families.²¹⁶ A special law on Veterans of KLA regulated the access of veterans to state benefits.²¹⁷ This law provided veterans with entitlements to a monthly compensation at least equal to the minimum salary in Kosovo, as well as free healthcare services, free urban transport, and professional education, among other benefits. Their family members also became entitled to 70 percent of their compensation after the death of the veteran.²¹⁸

As of September 2020, the number of KLA veterans was 36,161.²¹⁹ The total number of beneficiaries, including war veterans or their families, was 38,156 people, including 3,076 women.²²⁰ As women beneficiaries include veterans' family members, it was not possible to determine the number of women ex-combatants receiving these benefits. "Cases were not treated as they should have been! They are not even sorted by number," a representative of the Office on Issues of Categories Deriving from the War told KWN by phone, when asked. Another issue, he said, was that the archives were under investigation by the Special Prosecutor's Office and could not be accessed.²²¹ Meanwhile, according to an article published by

the Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN) in 2013, KLA had 632 women members.²²²

Those veterans who had joined the KPC worked as part of this civilian security organisation, which operated from 1999 to 2009. Women comprised 3.5 percent of the KPC.²²³ Women's unequal participation was attributed to insufficient job openings. "We don't have a woman general," said the then KPC Gender Focal Point Fahri Sadriu in 2007. "We considered giving more opportunity to women because they deserve it. We would select a woman general, but we don't have enough space. If we had the opportunity, we would do something more."²²⁴ They would later appoint a woman colonel. "But not because she was female," emphasised Colonel Safet Sylja, "but on the basis of merit."²²⁵

In 2008, the KPC transformed into the new Kosovo Security Force (KSF) with the mandate "to participate in crisis response operations, including peace support operations, to assist civil authorities in responding to natural and other disasters and emergencies [and] to dispose of explosives."²²⁶ In 2011, women comprised a meagre 8.2 percent of the Force. "We are still not completely satisfied with the number of women in the Kosovo Security Force," said Halime Morina, then Coordinator of the KSF Human Rights Unit. "But it has improved drastically, and it is improving," she said.²²⁷ They have undertaken recruitment campaigns involving mobile teams to encourage citizens and women in particular to apply. "I'm a woman, I'm in KSF, and I'm not discriminated against," women said during town meetings where they sought to recruit more women. "My rights are respected." Following these meetings, 100 women were accepted into KSF.²²⁸

Women's involvement in KSF has increased from 8.2 percent in 2011 to 11 percent in 2020.²²⁹ Moreover, a woman had risen to the rank of General within KSF. Although KSF still lacks a gender balance, Morina believed that socialised views of the army as "men's domain" have increasingly faded, and others concurred.²³⁰ She said that every position women hold

today within the KSF is because they worked hard, and they deserve it.

As of 2011, the Ministry of the Kosovo Security Force oversaw and inspected all activities of the security force. It also had responsibility to develop and implement laws and regulations, as well as propose and oversee the security force budget.²³¹ As every other ministry, it had a human rights unit and gender officer. The Ministry collaborated with experts to draft an action plan for furthering human rights and gender equality within the Ministry and KSF, adopted in September 2011.²³² It states: “the objectives and actions that must be taken in order to further gender equality and implement Resolution 1325”, Morina said.²³³

In 2014, this Ministry was transformed into the Ministry of Defense, and KSF became the Kosovo Armed Forces in 2019. Since then, they cooperated with women’s rights groups, international gender experts, and NATO advisors to better incorporate Resolution 1325 in their policies and strategies, according to Morina.²³⁴ It has incorporated training on Resolution 1325 into its curricula for new recruits, “where 30 minutes of the basic training is devoted to gender equality”, according to Morina.²³⁵

Altogether, the 37 women working in the Ministry comprise 32.7 percent of its workforce in 2011. Some women sat in decision-making positions, including seven lieutenants and five women colonels, three of which headed departments. Although women were somewhat better represented than in the KPC, they remained underrepresented compared to men. Moreover, women’s representation has decreased over time. Of the 123 civil personnel in the Ministry of Defense in 2019, only 33 were women (26.8 percent).²³⁶ Further, there were no women colonels and only three women lieutenants, so women comprised only 7 percent of decision-making positions.²³⁷ Thus, women do not hold 50 percent of Ministry positions at all levels, as foreseen in the Law on Gender Equality. Morina observed:

Now this figure shows that we have not managed to respect the Law on Gender Equality that ensures us [women] in the Ministry to be 50 percent. This figure shows that we have not managed to raise it to a proper level or in accordance with the Law that we ourselves have approved in the Ministry of Defense.²³⁸

The Kosovo Security Council, established in 2009, did not initially include any women, impacting the extent to which women's needs were considered in national security policy. Women's rights activists felt the Council had a long way to go towards ensuring women's and girls' specific security needs were considered, Qosaj Mustafa said:

When it comes to key decisions where priorities are being set, sadly we don't see many women involved. Even when a national security strategy is being drafted, we don't have many of women's security issues present, only mentioning trafficking of human beings, but without any concrete follow-up and activities and budget.

The National Security Strategy, drafted in 2010, should have considered women's and girls' security needs, as per the UN Secretary-General's guidance.²³⁹ However, only one article committed to involving a gender perspective, alongside ethnicity, in the security sector through policies of recruitment, retention, and promotion.²⁴⁰ Otherwise, a gender perspective was largely lacking. In 2020, the new Security Strategy was under public consultation, but it also lacked a gender perspective.²⁴¹

Women also remained underrepresented in Kosovo's Foreign Service, established in 2008.²⁴² Women comprised a meagre 15 percent of diplomats (three women) in diplomatic and consular missions of the Republic of Kosovo in 2008. This increased slightly to 18 percent (13 women) from 2009-2011. Headway can be attributed to the outcry by women

parliamentarians and KWN who demanded that women should have decision-making positions within the service.

In 2011 only two of the 18 ambassadors were women,²⁴³ and the proposed appointments for 2012 did not include a single woman, prompting reactions from women parliamentarians.²⁴⁴ In 2020, then MP Osmani recalled:

We have had several cases when all women deputies in the Assembly of Kosovo have come together despite political differences. In 2012-2013, 40 women requested from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to respect the Law on Gender Equality and Resolution 1325 in the representation of women in diplomatic missions. At the moment, when 40 women of different ethnicities and different parties all came together at the Press Conference, the media teased us with the [Albanian folk] song "*Jena motra kallabllak*" ["We are too many sisters"]. So, we didn't have media support. However, we did not stop. In that group, I was responsible for preparing the legal part of our demands, and we sent letters to the then [U.S.] Secretary of State Mrs. Clinton, Chancellor Merkel, and many other leaders on this issue, and about some attempts coming from our political parties ... to remove the gender quota from the Law on General Elections. So, for these two topics we have written and sought the implementation of this Resolution [1325], but also of our Law on Gender Equality, to have at least 40 percent women [in diplomatic missions]. We got positive answers from the vast majority of international leaders to whom we wrote. And then, at that time, Minister Hoxha wrote us a letter and said "Okay, I agree with you, and we will have at least 40 percent women." So, it was initially a complete list of men nominated, and he then turned the list back and appointed ... women, and those women today are career diplomats who serve as ambassadors So,

they are serving for more than eight years in our diplomatic service.²⁴⁵

While the percentage of women serving in Kosovo’s diplomatic service has not reached gender equality, it has clearly risen over time from 15 percent in 2008, to 18 percent in 2011, to 35 percent in 2019 (see Table 4).²⁴⁶

Table 4. Women and Men in Foreign Missions

Year	Women	Men	% Women
2008	3	17	15%
2009	13	59	18%
2010	13	59	18%
2011	13	59	18%
2012	-	-	-
2013	-	-	-
2014	27	95	22%
2015	27	83	25%
2016	40	91	31%
2017	42	92	31%
2018	46	112	27%
2019	50	130	35%

Within the justice system, the Kosovo Supreme Court had seven women judges and four men in 2011. In 2020, this decreased to only five women and 11 men.²⁴⁷ Overall, in 2011, 28 percent of the 244 judges

in all courts were women and 30 percent of the 88 prosecutors.²⁴⁸ Since then, as of 2020, the percentage of women judges had increased slightly, reaching 33 percent, while women comprised 42 percent of the 190 prosecutors.²⁴⁹ Women held 50 percent of administrative staff positions, but only 23 percent of decision-making posts in Kosovo courts.²⁵⁰

Within the Kosovo Judicial Council, 39 percent of employees were women, though 10 of the 12 decision-making posts were held by men in 2011. In 2020, this increased to 47 percent, though only three of nine decision-making positions were held by women (25 percent).²⁵¹ As of 2020, the Kosovo Judicial Council still did not have any specific strategy to recruit or employ women.²⁵²

Overall, despite a few positive examples, women have remained underrepresented in all Kosovo institutions. Moreover, women’s representation in several security bodies has even decreased in the last decade. A major challenge

institutions faced in recruiting and retaining women has been what research participants called the “patriarchal mentality”, still present in Kosovo and internationally, which lends to a security sector that is primarily “a man’s world”. While some progress has been made, overcoming this still present mentality, and recruiting more women into all levels of institutions, is crucial for ensuring that women’s and girls’ specific security needs are considered and addressed.

SECURITY

"Security as a concept has to do with everybody, and it has to be offered to everybody. If you create security only for a particular part of society the other part will feel insecure. Security doesn't have the same meaning for men as for women. In Kosovo we have a post-war situation where almost everybody felt insecure. But I think a new social framework is being created in which security is playing an important role."

- Behar Selimi, former General Director,
Kosovo Police, 2011

"My point of view about the security of women in Kosovo is that it's not so good," said Fahri Sadriu in 2007 when he served as the Board Coordinator for Gender Equality in the Kosovo Protection Corps.¹ "Security includes many things such as personal insurance, health, and economic [security]," he said.

This section examines diverse aspects of women's security, based on Resolution 1325. This includes the extent to which women and girls *feel* safe in Kosovo.² The UN Secretary-General requests that the "safety, physical, and mental health of women and girls and their economic security are assured and their human rights respected".³ The Kosovo state and UN entities have responsibilities to prevent rights violations and protect women and girls, based on Resolution 1325.

The Government of Kosovo has yet to develop an index for monitoring women's and girls' security and identifying their concerns.⁴ Therefore, each of the following chapters explores an area in which the UN Secretary-General encourages attention in safeguarding women's and girls' security: preventing war-time sexual violence; ensuring post-conflict protection, including via early warning systems of possible renewed violence; preventing trafficking; safeguarding women and girls from domestic violence; and, more broadly, ensuring their human security.

WARTIME SEXUAL VIOLENCE

During the war, “women weren’t protected from violence even for one moment”

“Women weren’t protected from violence even for one moment. In Kosovo, they say, thousands of women were raped, but nothing is known for sure.”

- Nora Ahmetaj, Director, Centre for Research Documentation and Publication, 2011

They were wearing military clothes and had black scarves on their heads. They took my sister-in-law into the front room, and they were hitting her and telling her to shut up. The children were screaming, and they also screamed at the children. She was with the paramilitary for [a] half-hour. She was resisting, and they beat her, and the children could hear her screaming. I could only hear what was going on. I heard them slapping her. The children did not understand that they were raping her. After they raped my sister-in-law, they put her in line with us and shot her.⁵

This testimony of a woman eyewitness from Peja, recorded by Human Rights Watch, is only one of many accounts of the atrocities instigated against women and girls during the 1998-1999 war. Violence perpetrated by Serbian paramilitaries and police during this period has been well documented. The widespread reports of sexual violence led Human Rights Watch to assert that rape was used as a weapon of "ethnic cleansing" in Kosovo. "Rapes were not rare and isolated acts committed by individuals, but rather were used deliberately as an instrument to terrorize the civilian population, extort money from families, and push people to flee their homes," Human Rights Watch wrote.

Considering the heinous acts of violence against women during the wars in the former Yugoslavia, the 1998 Rome Statute that established the International Criminal Court (ICC) recognises that "rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, or any other form of sexual violence" are "crimes against humanity" when "committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack."⁶ The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) includes rape and "other inhumane acts" as "crimes against humanity."⁷ Resolution 1325 "calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse."⁸ Unfortunately, the Resolution came too late for Kosovo.

"It is primarily the young women who are rounded up in villages and small cities. The soldiers take groups of 5 to 30 women to unknown places in trucks or they are locked up in houses where the soldiers live," wrote psychologist D. Serrano Fitamant for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in May 1999.⁹ She continued:

Any resistance is met with threats of being burned alive. Gjakova, Pec [Peja] and Drenitza [Drenica] were often indicated as places where kidnapping [*sic*] and

collective rapes took place. The women were individually raped by many men, during a few hours but sometimes even for days. [In Berlenitz,] they then cut open the stomachs of many pregnant women and skewered the fetus on their blades. ... In the same city a group of 30 young girls was forced to follow the soldiers into a house while the mothers waited outside. For two hours the mothers listened to the screams of the young victims who then came out one by one. Some were covered in blood, others were crying and their heads were hanging low.

"These are not occasional incidents committed by a few crazy men," wrote Regan Ralph at Human Rights Watch. "Rape was used as an instrument of war in Kosovo, and it should be punished as such. The men who committed these terrible crimes must be brought to justice."¹⁰ Human Rights Watch documented 96 rapes that had occurred during the war in Kosovo. Estimates suggest that between 10 and 45 thousand women and girls were raped during the war.¹¹ "Women in Kosovo are waiting for justice, and so far none of the Kosovo indictments have included sex crimes," said Regan Ralph in 2000. "The sooner there are investigations and prosecutions, the sooner these women can begin to rebuild their lives."¹²

“Indictments are just words on paper”

“Failed by UNMIK, failed by EULEX, it is not surprising that few survivors have any faith in Kosovo’s own justice system.”

- Amnesty International, *“Wounds that burn our souls”*, 2017

Since the end of the war in Kosovo, three separate courts have held trials related to crimes committed in Kosovo during the conflict: The International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the Special War Crimes Chamber in Belgrade in Serbia, and Kosovo courts.¹³

As the only formal institution of transitional justice related to the Kosovo war, the ICTY was responsible for implementing Resolution 1325 by ensuring that “processes of transitional justice, reconciliation and reconstruction are gender responsive.”¹⁴ Yet, the mandate of the ICTY¹⁵ was not particularly responsive to women’s specific needs. The 79-page ICTY Status mentioned “women” only twice, both times related to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Girls were never mentioned; nor were the crimes allegedly committed against women in Kosovo.¹⁶ The ICTY outcome reports did mention Kosovo, but not gender-based violence. Their annual reports only mentioned gender-based violence in the recommendations to war crimes courts, towards developing frameworks which would “provide greater accountability for gender-based crimes”.¹⁷

Starting in 2003, the ICTY had a gender unit, responsible for furthering gender equality at the ICTY.¹⁸ A gender advisor sat in the Office of the Prosecutor, working to

mainstream gender expertise throughout the ICTY and to encourage a sensitive approach to investigating and indicting gender-based crimes.¹⁹ A sexual violence investigation team was formed in 1995 to train police for such investigations; it was later dissolved once awareness reportedly had increased.

As discussed in the last section, women’s participation in security and justice institutions can affect the extent to which these institutions consider the specific interests and needs of women and girls. As of 2011, women comprised roughly half of the total employees at the ICTY, though men tended to be represented more in decision-making positions. A month before its closure, women comprised 62 percent of ICTY staff (see Table 5).²⁰ However, by the end of the ICTY mandate in 2017, there were no women judges.²¹ The ICTY has had two women and two men serve as prosecutors, while all three deputy prosecutors have been men.²² With regard to the number of Kosovar women who testified at the ICTY, statistics were “not configured to provide data of this nature.”²³

Table 5. ICTY Staff by Gender and Position in 2011 and 2017

Position	<i>As of 2011</i>		<i>As of 2017</i>	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
ICTY staff overall	448 50%	456 50%	264 62%	161 38%
Presidents	1 14%	6 86%	1 14%	6 86%
Vice Presidents	2 33%	4 67%	2 22%	7 78%
Current permanent judges	2 13%	14 88%	0 0%	8 100%
Prior permanent judges	6 19%	25 81%	9 21%	34 79%
Ad Litem Judges	4 44%	5 56%	14 40%	21 60%
Prosecutors (all)	2 50%	2 50%	2 50%	2 50%
Deputy prosecutors (all)	0 0%	3 100%	0 0%	3 100%

In line with Resolution 1325, Pristina, Sarajevo, Zagreb, and Belgrade all had ICTY outreach offices with a mandate to facilitate activities in communities and engage local groups.²⁴ Outreach aimed to “communicate to the people of the former Yugoslavia the importance of holding accountable individuals who violate international humanitarian law and the significance of rendering justice to victims.” The UN Secretary-General also encourages bodies like the ICTY to organise hearings and meetings with women’s groups.²⁵ If such meetings have occurred, women’s groups in Kosovo have not heard about them. While attention was given to women in Bosnia and Herzegovina, no known ICTY outreach campaigns have targeted women in Kosovo. Rather, victims in Kosovo seem to have been largely ignored by the official transitional justice process at the ICTY.

As of 2011, charges involving acts of sexual violence allegedly perpetrated in Kosovo had appeared in only four cases at the ICTY: Milošević, Milutinović et al, Đjordžević, and Haradinaj et al.²⁶ While Haradinaj and Milutinović were acquitted, Milošević passed away during his trial. Vlastimir Đjordžević was convicted of persecutions on political, racial, or religious grounds, murder, deportation, and forcible transfer. He was sentenced to 27 years imprisonment for his “encouragement” or “support” of forces that: “forced deportation of approximately 800,000 Kosovo Albanian civilians”, “murdered hundreds of Kosovo Albanian civilians and other persons taking no active part in the hostilities and sexually assaulted Kosovo Albanians, in particular women.”²⁷ Yet, he was not convicted of charges relating to sexual violence:

While the Chamber has found that incidents of sexual assault have been established, no evidence has been presented that the perpetrators acted with intent to discriminate. Intent to discriminate is an essential element which must be proved. Therefore, the charge

of persecutions committed through sexual assault has not been established.²⁸

The ICTY ultimately identified four individuals as responsible for sexual violence in Kosovo, though only two, Nebojša Pavković²⁹ and Vlastimir Đorđević,³⁰ were convicted. Nikola Šainović and Sreten Lukić were originally acquitted of persecution through sexual violence in 2009.³¹ On appeal, their acquittals were reversed, but no new convictions were entered.³² Thus, of the hundreds, potentially thousands, of cases of alleged sexual violence in Kosovo, the ICTY convicted very few perpetrators. As per the UN Secretary-General's indicators, the "extent to which violations of women's and girls' rights are addressed in view of known patterns of war-time violations" has been insignificant.³³

At the Special War Crimes Chamber in Belgrade, Serbia, according to Amnesty International, "Serbia failed to bring Serbian police, paramilitaries and members of the Yugoslav Army to justice, despite the evidence for their criminal responsibility for rape, torture and other Crimes Related to Sexual Violence."³⁴ From four sexual violence related cases brought to the Special Court in Belgrade as of 2017, only one indictment was filed against a Serbian and three others against former KLA members. As of then, only one had resulted in a conviction.³⁵ According to the Humanitarian Law Centre and Human Rights Watch, high ranking military officials were unlikely to be indicted, due to the "climate of impunity in Serbia".³⁶

In Kosovo, courts prosecuted only three cases involving sexual violence during the war, and all of them "resulted in an acquittal after appeal", given the insufficient evidence provided, according to Amnesty International.³⁷ BIRN in Kosovo observed:

Of concern is the fact that in Kosovo, so far only three trials have been conducted on allegations of rape of women during the war, all of which have ended in

acquittals, as the courts have concluded that the evidence was insufficient to identify suspected aggressors. Among these cases is the case of Vassilje Krasniqi.³⁸

What slowed justice? Women's rights activists in Kosovo said that securing sufficient evidence for charging alleged perpetrators proved extremely challenging due to the extensive investigation process. Women's rights activist Sevdije Ahmeti explained:

Dates were very important. If women had a date when the crime occurred, I would study an archive of the Yugoslav police, and find out who was there on that date. It was the most dangerous work I did. ... I would take ICTY investigators to these sensitive places. Then the investigators needed to contact the women, but the interview was too long and harmful. It took hours and days. Each part needed hours to explain, and you can't miss even the smallest of details. ... Victims needed to remember the place, the number of perpetrators, the uniform of the perpetrators, the name of the commander... all these details made many women unable to be good candidates for witnesses. ... It's a type of exam, while meanwhile some victims needed doctors, gynaecologists, abortions. After the "exam" there were certain candidates that "passed" as "good witnesses."³⁹

Although they had been victims of horrendous crimes, many women struggled to recall all the details necessary for them to be a "good witness".

Provisions enabling women from Kosovo to testify also were less than satisfactory, Ahmeti said. For the few women who "passed the test" and could testify at the ICTY, "the consequences are very high," she said. "The accused has the right to have the name of the witness accusing them, by

international law.” Thus, Milošević, for example, could share the names of witnesses with his colleagues in Belgrade, potentially placing witnesses at risk, Ahmeti said.

The ICTY offered witness protection to avoid “the stigma that often follows the victims of sexual violence [and] presents a real obstacle to their efforts to re-socialise and continue with their lives.”⁴⁰ The ICTY witness protection unit had measures such as relocation and changing the victim’s identity. The ICTY provided support through the Victims and Witnesses Section (VWS):

When required, the VWS offers psychological counseling designed to ease the possible trauma of testimony. Experienced staff reinforce the witness’s coping mechanisms, and ensure that they fully control their input and exercise of rights during court proceedings. Moreover, the VWS staff is supposed to monitor the court appearance, at all times ensuring that the witness is not exposed to unbearable strain. After the testimony, VWS officers help witnesses reflect on their court experience and try to help bring some form of closure.⁴¹

While the ICTY’s witness protection services sound thorough, women’s rights activists in Kosovo felt witness protection and psychological counselling were insufficient. Ahmeti explained:

Witness protection starts the day they step into the tribunal and ends after they finish giving testimony. Now where can the victim go? Many times, the perpetrator still is waiting to be found, identified, and jailed. There is the fear that the victim’s family will be killed or that she will be killed.

In instances where witness protection was offered, sometimes it arrived late, according to Vepore Shehu whose organisation medica Kosova assisted two witnesses:

During the war, the witness was gang raped for two weeks and her father, sister, and brother were all killed in front of her eyes. She was a double witness in front of the tribunal in 2002-2003.

After she went to the ICTY the first time, her neighbours asked her about testifying. She said she was testifying about the killing of her family. There was a direct broadcast of the issue on TV. She was examined once for both crimes to save the ICTY's time. It was a closed session, not on TV, but the neighbours still found out.

She then had a second hearing to give her final statement. She refused. She didn't want to return to Kosovo. She already had been returned after the first hearing even though she didn't want to. She had a son and wanted the tribunal to guarantee them relocation to a third country. They said yes, so she went back to the ICTY and now she lives [elsewhere].

Protection is not available like this in all cases. Insecure circumstances and the Government not providing security for these women allow impunity to continue.⁴²

As Kosovo is a small country with strong family bonds and social networks, anonymity and confidentiality are difficult to ensure. "People know each other," commented Nora Ahmetaj. "Even with witness protection, somebody might recognise your voice."⁴³ Shehu agreed:

The lack of guarantees makes women not want to testify. They should have started these trials a long time ago. The more time goes by, the more difficult it is. Women are married now. How can you expect them to go back? ... How can we have implementation of 1325 if we don't have this justice for women?

Hesitancy to revisit the traumatic past, insufficient anonymity, and fear of perpetrators still roaming free have all precluded women from coming forward to testify.

Yet, experience from experts and women's rights activists suggests that some women are ready to testify when the right conditions are established. Contrary to other reports, Fitamant wrote:

I was surprised at their willingness to speak, as so many people had told me that they would be unwilling to talk about experiences which their communities regard as shameful. However I found the women did very much want to talk and had not been able to because there had been no one appropriate for them to talk to.⁴⁴

Perhaps some women's rights activists and investigators were lured into widely held assumptions that "stigma and shame" would prevent women from coming forward. Yet, had greater efforts been taken to create a secure climate in which women could speak, victims of rape may have been willing to testify, activists' conversations with women suggest.

Aside from the ICTY, UNMIK had the responsibility to investigate and prosecute war crimes that involved sexual violence, but data did not track sexual violence and was thus unavailable.⁴⁵ UN and EU officials told KWN that UNMIK left behind "messy" case files that EULEX then had to sift through.

"In January 2009, EULEX inherited from UNMIK reports received from 1999 onwards of more than 1,187 acts of suspected war crimes which UNMIK believes lack sufficient evidence to be handed over for prosecution and a further 50 that were referred to the UNMIK Criminal Division for indictment," the UN Secretary-General reported.⁴⁶ Under its mandate, EULEX's then executive powers included to "ensure that cases of war crimes ... are properly investigated, prosecuted, adjudicated and enforced, according to the applicable law."⁴⁷ EULEX established a War Crimes

Investigations Unit tasked with investigating missing persons, locating grave sites, and collecting evidence.

By August 2009, EULEX had begun investigating 50 cases, but 1,009 cases remained inactive, including 158 cases dismissed for lack of evidence, among other reasons.⁴⁸ The number of cases involving sexual violence was unavailable. As of 2010, none of the more than 40 international EULEX judges were dealing exclusively with war crimes, and only two of the 20 prosecutors were dedicated to war crimes.⁴⁹ By the end of 2009, EULEX had tried four war crimes cases involving eight defendants;⁵⁰ seven were convicted and one died. Of the seven EULEX case files that involved charges of war crimes against civilians, none involved sexual violence. Only one case involved a woman victim, a Kosovo Albanian whom KLA member Idriz Gashi shot to death in the woods near Vranoc, Peja on 12 August 1998.⁵¹ Gashi was convicted and received only 14 years imprisonment. Not a single case involving sexual violence perpetrated by Serbian forces against women seems to have existed.

Initially sexual violence perpetrated against women during the war did not appear to be a priority for EULEX, women's rights activists said. Lina Andeer, then of the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, said in 2011 that EULEX did not have any strategy to identify and address sexual and gender-based violence cases. Rather, they seemed sceptical about investigating such cases, due to the many challenges involved with such investigations. She said:

They are not taking any special measures to find out about rape. There are five cases reported, but we've found there should be more. There is a lack of will, coordination, and capacity even with all their access and ability.⁵²

EULEX representatives said cases had not moved forward because time had passed, identifying witnesses willing to testify was difficult, and evidence was lacking.⁵³

As of 2011, tides were slowly turning, though, and EULEX began investigating sexual violence cases. EULEX representatives also met with women's organisations to discuss the process and potential collaboration. This shift in approach perhaps may be attributed to the unwavering pressure of women's rights activists on EULEX; growing international attention to Resolution 1325, as reflected within the EU's aforementioned policy documents; and the perseverance of investigator Nina Pelkonen within the EULEX war crimes investigation team, who worked closely with women's rights organisations. Later, a strong woman Head of Mission started from 2016, and the hiring of the very same Lina Andeer to serve as a very committed Gender Advisor starting in 2015 further enhanced EULEX's role in addressing conflict-related sexual violence. EULEX initiated the first-ever investigations into cases where rape was charged as a war crime in Kosovo. EULEX in close cooperation with UN Women also contributed to building the capacities of local war crime investigators and prosecutors, including by delivering training on interviewing techniques for survivors and witnesses of conflict-related sexual violence.⁵⁴

EULEX started collaborating more closely with women's rights organisations that had been assisting women survivors in an effort to bring justice. Even so, Shehu described the process as very difficult:

[W]hen EULEX started investigating sexual violence crimes, we provided technical, logistical resources. Women refused to enter the EULEX building with evidence ... Many of them testified in secret, without telling their families and spouses. All the time, they were scared that someone might see them and allude that they were testifying about sexual violence. This is why they refused to enter EULEX's building.

[B]ut we found an alternative way: providing a space in our office where interviews took place. The investigative police came here and took the evidence,

and this involved several stages, where multiple interviews were required. It was not an easy process as [the survivors] were asked about details for documentation, and it was not easy for them to go back in time and describe those events in details. It was a very traumatic process, but the fact the interviews took place in our office was an advantage because there were psychologists attending, and there were opportunities for breaks during the interviews.

Given the social stigma associated with coming forward, Shehu said they used a "special strategy", for which they received support from the EU in 2013-2015:

We ... addressed the promotion of gender equality through older women, ages 65-70, as they are affected by tradition more than youngsters, and [we tried to convince them] to start supporting victims of sexual violence. There were activities combined with various sessions including art therapy and joint sessions with victims of violence. Now, we had a survivor come with her mother-in-law, who encouraged her, "Go to medica for sessions, and I also want to come because I am traumatised that my son was killed." When the mother-in-law was ... in an activity, the survivor separately gave her testimony [confidentially]. We used different strategies to face these patriarchal obstacles.⁵⁵

Still today, many women fear coming forward to access justice or seek assistance, lest their identity be revealed, BIRN in Kosovo reported:

Protected witnesses who are anonymous are declaring that they cannot initiate civil lawsuits due to fear of their exposure. Even victims who had to keep their identities hidden have already been unable to seek reparation in civil proceedings, due to the fact that in

order to pursue this issue in civil proceedings, the Law does not guarantee the concealment of their identities and as a condition for filing a lawsuit they will need to reveal their identity, which could endanger their lives.⁵⁶

Amid these difficulties, women have seen few results after giving their testimonies. Shehu continued:

What happened? Arrest warrants were issued, and until 2015 those arrest warrants remained on paper. The perpetrators continue to be free. These cases were from the time when the trial against Milošević started, in 2002, 2004, 2005. At this time, [women] participated in the tribunal, while in EULEX the period was 2012-2015. Access to justice is one of the most important areas in the context of the Resolution, which has many setbacks. There is no progress in this area.⁵⁷

From 1,200 cases inherited from UNMIK in 2008, in 2017 EULEX proceeded to court “two cases of alleged rape of which only one, resulting in an acquittal, was concluded,” according to Amnesty International.⁵⁸ According to them, the other case was “abandoned before the trial could be concluded”.⁵⁹ Thus, some consider that EULEX has failed in bringing justice for survivors of sexual violence perpetrated during the war in Kosovo. Moreover, their entire credibility has been questioned. Shehu continued:

In a TV show, a representative of EULEX appeared and stated that the files of sexual violence that EULEX received from witnesses were handed over to Serbia! Now the question arises: why were they handed over without consulting the party who was an important part of the process? Why weren't women informed about this? The arrest warrant was announced, and then what happened? What happened to many other files that have been taken from so many [women]?

How is it possible to hand them over to Serbia? Transparency ... this is a very important part, and transparency is lacking.

As a result, she said:

Women have lost faith ... Women are quite demotivated because there are no concrete results, and we as NGOs have not even tried to encourage them to approach justice. [Because] without regulating the extradition of criminals [from Serbia and other locations], these indictments are just words on paper. And the lack of will to apprehend criminals causes even more consequences for women's emotional and psychological wellbeing. That's why we are waiting for the Dialogue [between Kosovo and Serbia] to consider these issues. Maybe they will create some mechanisms between the two countries because women do not have the courage to testify in front of special courts.

As of 2020, the Kosovo-Serbia Dialogue had not resulted in any such agreement for the extradition of criminals for justice. Meanwhile, while EULEX already had begun referring new cases to the Kosovo authorities in 2014,⁶⁰ EULEX's executive mandate was reduced further in 2018,⁶¹ and the responsibility of investigating, prosecuting, and adjudicating crimes committed during the conflict, including ensuring justice for survivors of sexual violence was passed over to the Kosovo criminal justice system. Meanwhile, the entire process of remembering and resharing their stories has opened wide women's old wounds, potentially contributing to re-traumatisation. This left some activists wondering, in the end, if it has been worth it, as one said:

I personally wonder if expectations were raised too high. Many women came forward, but was there any

outcome? ... There is a fine line between ensuring justice and exposing women to more trauma.

Following international pressure to deal with war crimes on 3 August 2015, the Kosovo Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office were established.⁶² They had the mandate and jurisdiction over crimes against humanity that occurred in Kosovo "between 1 January 1998 and 31 December 2000 by or against citizens of Kosovo or the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia."⁶³ However, to date, it has focused primarily on prosecuting Albanians for alleged war crimes. Aida Dërguti, the former MP who initiated the parliamentary debate on survivors of sexual violence in war, expressed her frustration with the international approach to justice:

The prosecution of war crimes in general, and those affecting women in particular, has so far been a total failure and left much to be desired. Although war crimes have been the exclusive competence of the international community for decades, they seem to have focused and done most of their work on the warring parties, with Kosovo being persecuted as an aggressor instead of a victim. Evidence of this lies in the ongoing lawsuits against members of the KLA in various domestic and international courts of justice, while we do not have a single case [of] punishment for crimes of sexual violence against women and girls in Kosovo. Resolution 1325 is insufficient as an instrument to bring justice for crimes committed against women during the war. The UN could do much more since the vast majority of states are members under its umbrella. It should find ways to establish mechanisms and put pressure on member states to achieve justice for women and war reparations.⁶⁴

Shehu agreed:

This court, since its establishment, began with indictments against the alleged crimes of KLA soldiers. However, it should deal not only with one ethnic group, but also with the crimes committed by the [Serbian] paramilitary army and police in Kosovo. I am not going to accept amnesty from anyone; a crime is a crime, and those who have committed crimes should be punished.⁶⁵

Indeed, international law does not allow for amnesty in the case of war crimes, including sexual violence perpetrated against women. This is emphasised in Resolution 1325 and even reinforced by other recent resolutions such as Resolution 2467 (2019), which clearly states “the need for the exclusion of sexual violence crimes from amnesty and immunity provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes”.⁶⁶

Frustrated by the lack of justice and insufficient attention to sexual violence survivors by broader transitional justice initiatives in the region, women’s rights organisations undertook an initiative towards transitional justice on women’s terms: the Women’s Court. A joint initiative of KWN from Kosovo, Women in Black from Serbia, and the Mothers’ Movement of the enclaves of Srebrenica and Žepa from Bosnia and Herzegovina, the initiative brought together women’s rights organisations from throughout the former Yugoslavia. According to KWN:

The Court involved neither perpetrators nor judges. It offered a feminist, rather than a legal, approach to justice. The Court sought to create a safe space that would empower women from across the former Yugoslavia to tell their stories of suffering, courage, and resistance.⁶⁷

Following several preparatory meetings, an estimated 500 women from throughout the former Yugoslavia gathered in Sarajevo. For four days, women shared their truths and

experiences from the 1990s, including stories of torture, rape, and loss of loved ones.⁶⁸ According to Kvinna till Kvinna, women showed a “determination for peace and justice, not vengeance. For reparation, safety, for good future of them and their children, and for solidarity with all women, across all possible borders”.⁶⁹ By recognising the past, the Women’s Court thus sought to support women in building a peaceful future together.⁷⁰

Meanwhile, women of different ethnic groups were exposed to sexual violence during the war in Kosovo. While none have seen justice, even fewer have received support from the public and civil society, according to Shpresa Agushi:

One year ago it was published on social media that she [a Roma survivor of sexual violence] reported her case, and she was a witness in the courts for a crime that happened to her during the war. And the NGOs that deal with these issues had knowledge, and no one supported her. Unfortunately, the moment I saw it on social media, I heard about it because the NGOs that deal with these issues have said that they have followed her case, but they cannot deal with all women. ... However, she was brave, and she has gone so far that she has been in Belgrade. [T]o go there to talk about this in Serbia is not easy. [S]till this was without success. Her son made it public [what happened to her] after her death. She died, and she did not get her right [to justice]. It turned out that she was the first Kosovar woman who had the courage to talk about the rape committed against her during the war by members of the Serb forces. This is very discriminatory by the institutions and NGOs that deal with these women [and] who did not support [her]. Even though she fought very hard for her rights, she did not have the support and understanding of the institutions and NGOs. This makes other women lose faith.⁷¹

As Vjosa Osmani, then acting President of Kosovo, concluded:

[S]till 20 years after the war, justice for crimes committed during the war in Kosovo has not been served yet. To this day, the deserved punishments for the crimes committed during the last war in our country have not been convicted. In this regard, there has been no justice for women either, and moreover they have been stigmatised and have fallen victim to the many prejudices that follow them in the post-war period.⁷²

“We Don’t Want Flowers. We Want Justice for Survivors of Sexual Violence”

“As we were on the eve of March 8, the date on which KWN always protested on various topics about women’s rights, it was decided that the motto of March 8, 2012 would be “We do not want flowers. We want justice for women raped during the war.”

- Aida Dërguti, former MP, 2020

Encouraging women to demand justice, or simply to live more peacefully within their communities, requires transforming social norms. Following the media hype surrounding victims immediately after the war, what women’s rights activists called the “re-raping” of women, silence engulfed the issue. As a result, few women who suffered sexual violence were willing to come forward to seek justice or support.

Unlike in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where politicians publicly recognised and strongly denounced the sexual violence perpetrated against women and girls, initially no such public recognition of rape occurred in Kosovo, despite women activists’ requests for such recognition. “Government members will continue to ignore women if there is no public recognition,” Rogova said in 2011.⁷³ At the time, Shehu added, “There needs to be something in the law, in public, so that people know it’s important and that women didn’t want it. It could have happened to a woman they know.” She said:

I think public recognition is something that comforts you. One of my husband's clients got pointed at on a bus. She was a rape survivor. After that she decided that she would walk to work instead. Finally, when she returned to using the bus, someone pointed to her and asked her if she was the girl who was raped, and she responded, "Yes, but I didn't ask for it." Some people think that women were asking for it, when in fact women were at great danger going to get food and supplies for their households as the men hid in the basements during the war.

Shehu believes that more public outreach campaigns are needed so that people will become "more empathetic and thoughtful about the issue."

Towards an institutionalised response, her organisation *medica Kosova*, together with other women's rights organisations, instigated efforts to amend the Law on the Status and the Rights of the Families of Heroes, Invalids, Veterans, and Members of the KLA and of the Families of Civilian Victims of War; initially this Law did not entitle victims of sexual violence to benefits or pensions.⁷⁴ Recognition and social assistance towards protecting victims' wellbeing, women's rights activists observed, is crucial for un-weaving the web of silence and unfounded guilt surrounding women who suffered sexual violence during the war. Given officials' initial resistance to the idea, women rights activists knew they had to do something that would draw attention to the issue.

On 8 March 2012, activists gathered to mark International Women's Day in the centre of Pristina. Their placards called for justice for women. Together they sang a harrowing song requesting "justice for women" to the tune of the civil rights anthem "We Shall Overcome". Government representatives would later tell activists that they were "moved to tears" as the song echoed through the otherwise silent public square and the government building, as the "voices of angels" demanding justice. It marked the first time that the plight of

sexual violence survivors was ever discussed publicly in Kosovo.

The following day, for the first time, the Assembly of Kosovo discussed sexual violence perpetrated in war, initiated by former MP and then Deputy Leader of the *Vetëvendosje* (Self-determination) political party, Aida Dërguti. She requested that the status of survivors of sexual violence perpetrated during the war be recognised and for them to have access to financial support from the state. She recalled:

Everything started within *Vetëvendosje*, as a discussion between me, as Deputy Leader of the party, and Nazlie Bala. After this idea was approved by the party chairs, on the eve of 8 March 2012, we met with Igballe [Igo] Rogova, and together we started to plan the future steps. ... As we were on the eve of 8 March, the date on which KWN protested on various topics about women's rights, it was decided that the motto of 8 March 2012 would be "We do not want flowers! We want justice for women raped during the war."

[Together] we organised public discussions to inform the public on this topic. The chances of [the larger political parties] supporting an initiative coming from a small and very polarising opposition party were quite low. Therefore, Igo Rogova together with KWN took on the role of mediator between women MPs. The closed-door roundtables between women in politics and civil society, organised by KWN, aimed to secure votes for this Law from women MPs from other parties in the parliament. Eventually, the draft law was drafted in the *Vetëvendosje* Movement by five women: Dejana Mihali, Albana Fetoshi, Albana Gashi, Nazlie Bala, and me. This draft law was processed in the Assembly of Kosovo on behalf of the *Vetëvendosje* Movement.⁷⁵

The draft law failed to secure enough votes the first few times it was brought before the parliament. Indeed, as

Dërguti feared, majority political parties of the time dug in their heels, not wanting to accept a law put forth by *Vetëvendosje*. A few male politicians made outrageous public statements that rape was not so widespread. While others expressed concern regarding the budget implications, particularly as the Government had no accurate estimate of the number of women who had suffered rape.

Women in politics, women in civil society, and international allies all took to active lobbying, emphasising that independently verifiable evidence of rape existed from respected organisations, such as Human Rights Watch, and that, unfortunately, not all women would come forward; it would not bankrupt the state. Rogova met personally with political leaders across the spectrum of parties, emphasising that their failure to recognise the plight of women and to support them was the true shame.

Following continuous lobbying by an array of allies, eventually, two years later, in March 2014, the rights of survivors to compensation were finally recognised through the amendment of the existing law on the rights of combatants and other civilian victims of war.⁷⁶ In addition to financial support, this provided survivors with benefits, such as health services abroad in case they needed treatment as a consequence of war; priority access to employment in public and private sectors; release from property taxes; and priority access to government family housing if in difficult economic conditions.⁷⁷

The passage of this amended law was recurrently heralded as a key achievement in the latest decade towards implementing Resolution 1325. As Osmani recalled:

One of the biggest achievements in implementing Resolution 1325 in Kosovo was definitely the legal acknowledgment and compensation of victims. I remember how hard me and my fellow MPs had to work to ensure the number of votes we needed to pass the law. Even after its adoption back in 2014, we have to work every year to allocate the necessary budget,

to fight stigma, and to help women and men survivors of sexual violence to come forward and apply for survivor status.⁷⁸

Feride Rushiti, Executive Director of the Kosovo Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims (KRCT), also recalled the initial struggle to ensure funding for survivors:

The news went viral that day, making the day unforgettable! One of the largest media in Kosovo revealed the amount of financial support that survivors of sexual violence would get. I was astonished! I mean, we never mentioned how much they would get; this Law did not mention the amount because we did not know how many [women] there are, so the calculation was impossible. But ... 200 euros [per month compensation]!? That was ridiculous! I don't smoke, but that day I smoked a package of cigarettes while waiting to pick up my little daughter from kindergarten. I was with a survivor. I remember her words, "Please stop fighting. You cannot push the bear". I was in deep thoughts. After I arrived home and shared the story with my husband, he told me almost the same. But I replied, saying, "It's not over yet." I didn't want to believe, let alone accept it, as the Government hadn't met to approve it yet.

The first thing I did the next morning was schedule a meeting with the then Minister of Finance, Bedri Hamzaj. Then, I went to the office and met a survivor. She had emigrated to Sweden as a witness [for sexual violence] for The Hague tribunal, with a protected identity. For the first time she talked about her past openly. Because with a protected identity, she did not dare reveal her story. However, this story touched me so much emotionally that I had my emotions open when I met with the Minister.

He and his staff were waiting for me and my Colleague with chocolates, thinking we went there to thank him. I said, "No, we came here for another issue."

"What issue, what happened?" He asked.

Surprisingly, I said, "We didn't agree on 200 euros." I knew that there was a price-cap, knowing that [KLA] veterans from the nineties received 250 euros, and I knew I couldn't get there. Thus, I said, "What about 230 or 240 euros?"

He agreed, extending his hand, and said, "Deal. 230 it is."

This was not over as I had to go to the Ministry of Labour and the Social Welfare to change the decision, as it had already been sent there. I got lucky, as at that time these buildings were close to each other ... and I went there literally running. I arrived there just in time, and so we made it.⁷⁹

Women now would receive some compensation from the Government, recognising them and easing their economic hardships. However, activists adamantly emphasised that this does not constitute reparations. As Shehu explained:

It is progress that this scheme has been established, as victims are offered [some] financial stability. However, reparations must be paid by the aggressor: by the country that caused all this suffering. And Serbia, for 21 years now, hasn't paid anything.⁸⁰

Minire Begaj, Chair of the Commission for Verification and Recognition, agreed, "I wouldn't call it compensation or any kind of reparation; it is more of a personal pension."⁸¹

The amended Law also foresaw the establishment of a government commission on the recognition and verification of the status of sexual violence victims of the war whose initial mandate lasted five years.⁸² Under the careful leadership of

then President Jahjaga, the Commission was established in 2018 in close collaboration with women's rights organisations experienced in working with survivors. They discussed each detail to ensure that the Commission would safeguard confidentiality and treat women survivors with dignity during the process of claiming their rights. EULEX assisted the Commission with relevant prosecutorial documentation related to war crimes that could help women to be recognised as survivors so that they could claim benefits.⁸³

According to Begaj, as of 2020, they treated nearly 3,000 cases. Although the Law foresaw a deadline for submitting requests to expire after five years, Begaj believed the deadline should be extended if they cannot resolve all cases during this time:

We [the Commission] have a five-years' mandate to provide survivors with the right and recognition of status, but if we don't manage to finish all the cases [within the foreseen timeline] for various reasons, then the Government can extend our mandate until we resolve [all] the remaining issues.⁸⁴

Amnesty International also observed that the timeframe should be extended to give women time to come forward, given the very sensitive nature of cases.⁸⁵ Moreover, they called for extending the definition of the period of armed conflict, enabling better inclusion of women of all ethnicities. The current law states that the conflict ended on 20 June 1999, so women who suffered rape afterward, particularly Kosovo Serbs and Roma, but also some Albanian women, unfairly did not qualify for receiving benefits.

Under President Jahjaga's leadership, the issue of survivors also received significant local and international media coverage. This helped to address the next challenge: informing women about this new right and encouraging women to come forward to claim their rights. President Jahjaga spoke with survivors, women, and in media, encouraging women to come

forward. Under her patronage, in 2015 artist Alketa Xhafa Mripa collaborated with women's rights groups to gather thousands of donated dresses from women across Kosovo, representing the women raped; the exhibition in the Pristina soccer stadium gained worldwide attention. Meanwhile, women's rights groups working with survivors worked tirelessly to inform women about their new rights and supported them in the administrative processes to claim these rights.

Women's rights groups have been instrumental in encouraging women to come forward to claim their rights. Some women who went public with their stories also wanted to empower other women. According to Rushiti, after Vasfije Krasniqi Goodman, a survivor, came forward publicly in 2019, Shyhrete Tahiri also went public:

Every year we tried to come up with new cases, to also send a message. Vasfije has been confirmed as a victim of rape. ... [S]he was taken from her home at age 16. ... In her case, her family also was supportive, and we wanted to deliver a message to the families of other survivors. ...

Not everyone is ready to make her story public. Therefore, [Shyhrete] said two words in front of the media, and then filed the case with the [Kosovo] Prosecution. With that, she sent a message to other survivors that if you want justice, you need to make your story public.

The advocacy and individualised support of women's rights groups coupled with the official recognition provided with the new Law thus contributed to more women feeling empowered to come forward and report their cases. Andeer reflected:

It was the awareness-raising campaign and the recognition of survivors through the Law that helped break the taboo. This, coupled with a few dedicated

persons working within EULEX [a police investigator supported by the Head of the War Crimes Unit] were instrumental ... [and] led to many more women coming forward.

At that time, however, it was decided that EULEX should not take on any new cases as of 15 April 2014, and all new cases had to be referred to the local criminal justice system.⁸⁶ The timing of this was unfortunate. There were significant problems with referring the cases to the local system: first, the lack of experience and expertise in war crimes and that there were only two prosecutors in charge of handling all war crimes cases. And second, women's lack of confidence in the local system, especially in its ability to protect the identity of the victims. I think that the no-new cases policy could have exempted sexual violence cases due to their very sensitive nature.⁸⁷

Although the awareness-raising and recognition efforts encouraged more women to come forward, distrust in Kosovo authorities to treat cases with competence, confidentiality, and care undermined women's access to justice. The timing indeed was unfortunate and a missed opportunity for finally enabling access to justice for women.

Meanwhile, the mere fact that the state has recognised the plight of survivors and provided support has positively impacted survivors' self-esteem, activists said. Rushiti recalled a conversation she had with a survivor just after she received money in her bank account for the first time:

I remember a phone call I received from one of the survivors. When I picked up the phone, the first thing I heard was music in the background. She started talking, telling me that she had bought three big bags of flour ... and that, for the first time, she had that much money in her hands. "I left those big bags of flour in the middle of the living room, to let everyone

know that I can also contribute for our home," she said, literally. It was very emotional!

This is not much money at all. [Survivors] use it to buy medicine, to help their daughters get an education. [B]eyond that, this represents recognition from institutions. Thus, they don't have to feel guilty or shameful anymore, as social norms made them feel [before] because the state is treating them with full integrity and dignity. ... Thus, their status in the family changes, as they become empowered and supported.⁸⁸

“WOMEN’S SECURITY... A PRIMARY OBJECTIVE FOR PEACEKEEPERS”

"A comprehensive and sustainable peace is not possible in post-conflict situations unless women's security and participation is a primary objective for peacekeepers."

- UN senior official, Security Council meeting, 2008⁸⁹

It was morning in the small, quiet village of Krushe e Vogel. The village began to bustle with townsfolk arising to complete their daily tasks. Women of the village carried pitchforks on their way to move grass and begin their strenuous labour for the day. Few women had male family members to help them. On 26 March 1999, 114 men, 70 percent of the men in the village, had been separated from their families and massacred by their own Serb neighbours. Others went missing. Additional crimes like rape and torture were committed against women and children before their Serb neighbours and paramilitary forces chased them to the Drini River, telling them to either “drown themselves or walk to Albania”. Their homes were then burnt to the ground, their cattle killed, and their fields destroyed.

Although these crimes were never prosecuted or even acknowledged by the Government of Serbia, the women in the village have worked hard to rebuild their lives with support from local women’s organisations. Now they can make their own living. They have learnt to drive tractors, bring their own goods

to market, and provide peer support to each other. Life has slowly been looking brighter.

On 25 May 2006 at around 9:15 a.m. something out of the ordinary stirred in Krushe e Vogel. Twelve UNMIK police armoured vehicles arrived unannounced. Neither the Kosovo Police, nor elected officials, nor anyone from the village were informed about their visit. The vehicles stopped, and an UNMIK police officer asked a girl where they could find the house of the Batusha family. As the girl pointed to the house, other villagers peered into the motionless vehicles. They saw inside the cars their former Serb neighbours who had committed atrocities against them seven years ago.

"They are coming back!" A woman screamed, as the memories of that horrid day in March 1999, returned to haunt her.

Hearing her, women on their way to the fields approached the UNMIK vehicles. On behalf of the women villagers, Shpresa Shehu, a leader, schoolteacher, and women's rights activist, asked the UNMIK police if the women could speak with the passengers in the vehicles. The women wanted to ask their neighbours what had become of their children and husbands still missing since the war. The UNMIK officers refused.

Dissatisfied with the response and fearful of their neighbours' return, women sat in the middle of the road, preventing the UNMIK convoy from proceeding into their village. UNMIK police officers tried to forcibly move the women, grabbing them by the shoulders. When the women began to struggle, officers started hitting them with riot batons and the butts of their guns. This incited women to throw stones at the UNMIK police officers.

Eventually, the officers returned to their armoured vehicles. As they drove away, they projected tear gas, including as they passed the schoolhouse on the edge of the village, where primary school children were playing during recess.

Dozens of children had to be taken to the hospital in Prizren for treatment for tear gas, while women suffered

psychological shock. When women's rights activists arrived to support them, they found the women shaking with fear, deeply disturbed with memories from the war and anxious that the murderers of their loved ones would return.

"I saw the exact same expressions on their faces that day as I saw the day that their homes were burned and their family members were killed," said women's rights activist Marta Prenkpalaj of the Motrat Qiriazhi Association.⁹⁰ On that horrific night in 1999, when the women and children of Krushe e Vogel were forced out of their homes, she had used a tractor to take them across the river to safety. "The UNMIK police have re-traumatised them", she said.

"The UNMIK police failed to inform any of the democratic institutions about their visit; they used unnecessary violence against women and children; and they refused to let the women communicate with the people they were transporting," KWN wrote in a letter addressed to UNMIK Special Representative to the Secretary-General Søren Jessen-Peterson and UNMIK Police Commissioner Kai Vittrup.⁹¹ The letter eventually led to a full inquiry and a public apology by Jessen-Peterson.⁹² Vittrup left the mission later that year.⁹³

The UN Secretary-General calls on the UN Security Council and regional organisations to establish provisions that address the specific needs of women and girls in early warning systems and conflict prevention mechanisms.⁹⁴ However, a Security Council examination conducted after "a bloody decade of peacekeeping failures, such as in ... the former Yugoslavia" revealed the lack of attention to women's and girls' needs. "The Council has never included a mention of women, peace and security in its resolutions on the situations in ... Kosovo," the 2010 report concluded.⁹⁵ Aside from a few statements and actions at the mission level,⁹⁶ the UN Security Council itself has not taken any known actions related to Resolution 1325 to address the needs of women and girls in Kosovo.⁹⁷

The UN Secretary-General calls for police and military components of peacekeeping missions to issue directives that include "measures to protect women's and girls' human

rights.”⁹⁸ However, as the story of *Krushe e Vogel* suggests, not only have measures been inadequate, but some actions by UNMIK representatives in post-conflict Kosovo ignored the specific needs of women and girls, harming them instead.

“Measures were taken, but they were not effective in my humble perception,” said Tilly Stroosnijder, the Police Gender Advisor for UNMIK in 2011.⁹⁹ The pre-planning, crime assessments, coordination, communication, training, Standard Operating Procedures, and policies all contained “a lot of gaps”, she said. “We as internationals needed to cooperate closely with host interlocutors [the Kosovo police] to understand the context, but we didn’t.” Poor cooperation with the Kosovo police meant security issues were insufficiently understood and thus under-addressed.

Well-informed measures to protect women’s and girls’ human rights require accurate context analyses of the specific security threats they face.¹⁰⁰ No such analyses specific to women and girls seem to have been conducted by peacekeepers in Kosovo. Instead, institutions said they considered all citizens’ security needs. “We do not believe that UNMIK carried out specific assessments of threats to women and girls,” wrote Philippe Tissot of UNMIK, “although UNMIK regularly carried out assessments of the security situation generally in Kosovo.”

However, UNMIK has since changed its approach. For the last decade, UNMIK has conducted context analyses of specific threats that women and girls face in Kosovo. The last such analysis was carried out in 2019 and 2020 to inform the “preparation of the UNMIK Gender Framework Strategy”, according to Thais Santa Cruz:

As a result, a full strategy has been developed to address many of the issues affecting women and girls, concentrating on topics like the meaningful participation of women in decision-making, peace, and political dialogue processes; barriers to women’s equal access to justice; addressing sexual and gender-based

violence; supporting women entrepreneurs to build business across communities; cooperation with women's groups and partners to advance the women, peace, and security agenda; and, systematic integration of gender analysis into our own planning, programming and reporting systems.¹⁰¹

Such efforts signal improvement in UNMIK's planning to address women and girls' needs, compared to a decade ago.

Meanwhile, KFOR has used an "integrated approach" whereby "gender is not an additional thing to do but should be an integral part of every activity", according to the prior KFOR Gender Advisor Elisabeth Schleicher in 2011:

To understand the situation on the ground is at the same time an early warning system. When KFOR makes an analysis on the specific needs of the population we take into account the whole picture, meaning the different needs, roles, responsibilities, and security threats of men, women, boys, and girls.¹⁰²

Thus, context analyses, early warning systems, and directives are not specific to women and girls, but rather consider their needs as part of KFOR's overall mandate and daily work.

At EULEX, police did not initially have directives in place towards protecting women's and girls' human rights, said then Gender Advisor Sirpa Rautio:

There was no specific guidance issued by the police component. The Human Rights and Gender Office increasingly tried to push for such guidance in particular in how to address trafficking in human beings. Generally, the guidance that existed was generic and it seemed to us that police were not fully aware how they were supposed to carry out their work. ... Police need very clear guidance, and there certainly wasn't anything on gender issues.¹⁰³

Installing specific operating procedures for police at the outset is crucial, research participants said. With time, EULEX has developed more policies, such as “to assist the Kosovo institutions to combat the crime of human trafficking”,¹⁰⁴ among other protocols.

EULEX “follows the policy framework developed and drafted at Brussels level”, said Tagliani. As the mission’s Gender Advisor, she uses this framework in:

[A]dvising mission leadership, management, and staff members not only of the obligations the Mission has in implementing the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda, but also on how to integrate a gender perspective in the implementation of the Mission Mandate, both in its internal and external components. [She also seeks] to transmit the meaning of the importance of gender mainstreaming in all actions to ultimately reach gender equality and benefit equally women and men, girls and boys, through the Mission’s actions.¹⁰⁵

In the last decade, EULEX has made several changes in its reporting, particularly related to trafficking and gender-based violence, she continued:

Domestic violence and sexual violence cases were prosecuted and adjudicated as part of the Mission subsidiary competence. To this regard, EULEX judges have issued landmark judgments in domestic violence cases. From 2012 onwards, the Strengthening Division monitored and reported on gender-based violence cases, including domestic violence cases, and the same Division availed itself of the work of an Advisor to Kosovo Police who followed closely the work done in the field of domestic violence. Under its new 2018 mandate, EULEX has made gender-based violence a

specific thematic area under its monitoring functions with the aim to support law enforcement and judicial institutions through specific findings and recommendations and to provide targeted assistance.¹⁰⁶

These resulting reports, produced by EULEX on different topics such as domestic violence, victims of sexual and gender-based violence, or the utilisation of forensic opportunities in rape allegations, among others, have subsequently been shared with relevant institutions such as the Kosovo Police, Kosovo Judicial Council, Kosovo Prosecutorial Council, and Ministry of Justice.

Together with UN Women, Tagliani stated that EULEX “facilitated working group meetings with representatives of Kosovo Police, Chief State Prosecutor’s Office, Institute of Forensic Medicine and Kosovo Forensic Agency to enhance the institutions’ capacities in the acquisition and use of forensic evidence when investigating sexual and gender-based violence allegations.”¹⁰⁷ Keeping biological evidence of crimes is essential, Tagliani emphasised:

Also fundamental is the work that has been carried out in the past ten years by EULEX experts within the Institute of Forensic Medicine not only in the field of identifying missing persons, but also concerning sexual integrity cases. To this regard, in September 2019 the Institute of Forensic Medicine, in cooperation with EULEX and the Kosovo Police, launched the online and offline awareness-raising campaign “Speak up on Time” on the importance of preserving biological evidence in cases of sexual violence. Students from primary and secondary schools across Kosovo were the beneficiaries of lectures about sexual violence and the importance of preserving biological evidence for an effective prosecution and adjudication of the cases.¹⁰⁸

In its later years, EULEX began efforts to integrate a gender perspective in the Kosovo Correctional Service as well. Since 2016, EULEX has supported the creation of the Women's Association in the Kosovo Correctional Service, launched in September 2018. Activities empowered women officers, including through study visits to share best European practices in gender mainstreaming and women's career development in the correctional service.

Meanwhile, the EU Office in Kosovo has conducted a *Kosovo Gender Analysis* to inform its engagement in political dialogues with the Government of Kosovo in various sectors as well as its financial support to Kosovo from a gender perspective.¹⁰⁹ Conducting gender analysis indeed is a requirement of the successive EU Gender Action Plans, in order to inform the political engagement and external financing of the EU.¹¹⁰

In terms of early warning systems, aside from KFOR's ongoing monitoring, since 2002 UNDP in Kosovo has issued Early Warning Reports that could warn of conflict and enable preventative actions that consider the needs of women and girls.¹¹¹ However, the reports seldom mentioned women's and girls' specific needs, let alone actions for addressing these. Three reports never mentioned women at all. Rarely was data within the reports disaggregated by gender.

In 2010, this Early Warning System was reframed as the "Public Pulse" series, which generated data on the perception of citizens regarding political, social, economic, and security developments and the situation in Kosovo.¹¹² Most of the Public Pulse reports published between 2013 and 2020 mainstreamed gender and disaggregated data by gender. Also, a specific report focused on "people's perception on gender issues from political, economic, educational, social, and security perspectives" and "women's participation in both social and political activities."

In the last 10 years, UNDP has integrated gender dimensions in all sectors and strengthened its performance in delivering for women and men. UNDP mainstreams gender in

its work related to democratic governance and peacebuilding, sustainable development, and inclusive growth, as well as environment, climate, and disaster resilience.¹¹³

A review of international missions' early warning systems, context analyses, and peacekeeping directives in 2011 revealed that few *specifically* sought to safeguard women's and girls' human rights.¹¹⁴ Rather, they said, women's and girls' needs were considered within missions' work more broadly. Since then, UNMIK, EULEX, the EU, and UNDP have demonstrated improvement by conducting more thorough gender analyses to inform their work.

Monitoring and responding to rights violations

"There was never any knowledge management in the mission. You never had a central location or database where all this stuff was kept. ... Unfortunately, this is how UNMIK kept statistics too. This is why it is pretty much impossible to compare crime statistics from 2000 to today. What happened was that the first person responsible for statistics in the UNMIK police was from Georgia [USA], for example. And so, she came in and she did it the way they did it in Atlanta. Then, the next person that came in, well he was from Hamburg. And so, he changed the whole system because, 'This is how we do it in Hamburg.' Now you end up with a situation where even if you compare the databases that still exist, you're comparing apples and oranges. This is one of the problems."

- Former OSCE employee, 2011

"People were shocked when they heard how 1325 was not implemented in Kosovo by those who signed it," Rogova said. "In 2008 UNIFEM sent a delegation to meet the Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality in the EU Parliament. It involved members of the Regional Women's Lobby, including Edita Tahiri, Flora Macula, and me. While I was there, I learned a lot, especially from the EU women deputies." Kosovar women activists decided to collaborate with women in the EU to increase awareness about Resolution 1325 and its implementation in Kosovo. "The idea was that we had to bring a group of Kosovar women politicians and women from civil society to the EU Parliament so deputies could hear that

implementation is not working,” Rogova continued, “because they don’t know. And the reason they don’t know is because the UN only said nice things in their reports home. ‘We did this...we did that.’ It’s all lies.”¹¹⁵

The UN Secretary-General calls for “operational gender-responsive systems ... to monitor, report and respond on violations of women’s and girls’ rights during conflict, ceasefires, peace negotiations and after conflict.”¹¹⁶ Perhaps the most authoritative monitor of violations of women’s and girls’ human rights in Kosovo should have been UNMIK in its periodic reports to the Security Council.¹¹⁷ A bit of digging and examination of these reports between 2002 and 2011 revealed that 20 out of 37 reports (54 percent) mention issues related to women’s and girls’ human rights, with a notable increase in later years.¹¹⁸ This means that nearly half of the reports were silent on the issue. None of the UNMIK reports involved a gender mainstreaming approach. This would include attention to how both the context and UNMIK intervention impact women and men differently. Only separate short sections dealt with women and girls, who then became invisible elsewhere in the reports. The human rights issues mentioned included violence against women, lack of access to justice for women, women’s insufficient participation in decision-making processes, gender inequalities, failures of laws to include provisions towards gender equality, insufficient consultation with women’s groups, and the need to strengthen the Gender Equality Office, the predecessor of AGE.

UNMIK reports tended to focus on the shortcomings of local leaders, usually remaining silent on its own planned actions as an administrator of Kosovo. Rarely were measures taken or implemented by UNMIK detailed. Exceptions included planned activities to implement “a long-term strategy to increase the number and improve the position of women in the Provisional Institutions” in 2006,¹¹⁹ and efforts to establish “seven additional Gender Equality Committees ... in the municipalities.”¹²⁰

To what extent have gender advisors' reports been included in UNMIK reporting to the UN Security Council?¹²¹ Unfortunately, in 2011, former gender advisors were unreachable and UNMIK lacked institutional memory on this issue. We did locate Tilly Stroosnijder, former Police Gender Advisor for UNMIK, who said the UNMIK Office of Gender Affairs "excluded" her from "the UN reporting and meeting system."¹²²

When asked if UNMIK included input from Kosovar women in reports, the recurring theme among women's rights activists was that they were not consulted.¹²³ "The UN has been a champion in ignoring organisations," said Vuniqi.¹²⁴ "The UNMIK Office of Gender Affairs thinks they will lose their jobs if they report what Kosovar women do and that we mobilise," said Rogova in 2007. "They should think how we can work together rather than taking all the glory for themselves." Activists felt that their concerns and the issues for which they advocated were not sufficiently included in UNMIK's reports to the UN Security Council. The exception was an effort coordinated by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Kosovo, where KWN's research on access to justice for domestic violence victims was included in the UNMIK report.¹²⁵ Aside from this notable exception, which occurred after UNMIK's administrative powers had been significantly reduced, activists felt UNMIK reports were not wholly truthful because UNMIK officials tended to exaggerate their own achievements while ignoring the voices of Kosovar women. The monitors failed to monitor themselves.

In 2020, Thais Santa Cruz, as the UNMIK Gender Advisor, said that UNMIK's approach has changed in the last 10 years:

Staff are required to ensure that all gender equality principles are reflected in all strategic documents, policies, and guidelines. Mission unit workplans must mainstream gender into their work and activities and must report on progress related to this issue.

Secretary-General reports to the Security Council must reflect evidence-based progress on the implementation of gender equality and the Women, Peace, and Security mandate.¹²⁶

Indeed, a rapid review of UNMIK reports to the Secretary-General revealed that 30 out of 30 reports (100 percent) mentioned issues related to human rights, and 29 of 30 reports (97 percent) specifically highlighted issues related to gender equality. In this period of 2012 to 2017, reports addressed issues related to gender equality and human rights in a separate "Human Rights" subchapter. In October 2017, the reports added a new subchapter on "Women, Peace, and Security", which analysed issues related to gender equality, women's empowerment, and women, peace, and security more in depth. Overall, issues related to women, peace, and security were confined to these two sections. Some reports also included issues related to women, peace, and security in other sections, such as rule of law. However, a gender perspective was not mainstreamed systematically throughout all reports. Issues mentioned included sexual violence during the war, gender-based violence, domestic violence, women's property rights, the Regional Women's Lobby, the international 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence Campaign, and International Women's Day.

Aside from UNMIK, Kosovo has other human rights bodies tasked with monitoring, investigating, reporting, and referring violations of women's and girls' human rights, towards implementing Resolution 1325.¹²⁷ While the Secretary-General names only OHCHR as the responsible human rights body, in Kosovo other bodies responsible for monitoring human rights perhaps include the EU, EULEX, Ombudsperson Institution, and Office of Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities, and Gender Issues.

Due to human rights bodies' poor data collection systems, it is impossible to examine gender-disaggregated data on the types of cases reported, referred, and investigated. In

writing the first edition of this book, KWN requests for information, particularly from UNMIK and EULEX, became Ping-Pong balls batted back and forth between personnel for four months. In the end no one sent any of the requested data. These monitors made it almost impossible to check what they monitored and how. They lacked data and proper tracking mechanisms.

Further, as of 2011, human rights bodies' consultations with women's organisations were largely *ad hoc*, with a few notable exceptions. Arbena Kuriu at OHCHR said she maintained good relations with women's organisations.¹²⁸ The OHCHR, she said, "works continuously with other UN agencies through the Security and Gender Coordination Group, and it has advised KWN on special procedures."¹²⁹ OHCHR's actions in 2011 seemed largely due to Kuriu's individual efforts. Women's rights activists said that in the ten years prior to her involvement, the OHCHR seldom met or collaborated with women's organisations.

The OHCHR's international strategy included Resolution 1325, and the Kosovo office updated its gender policy in 2011.¹³⁰ They established a task force on women's rights and gender, consisting of senior staff who make programmatic recommendations and implement gender-based training for professionals, Kuriu said:

It's part of our overall monitoring of human rights in Kosovo. Women have been identified in Kosovo as a special vulnerable group together with others. In that sense we pay particular attention to monitoring women's rights issues. Also, we mainstream gender programs in our own programs' action plans.¹³¹

The OHCHR global website offers contact information for reporting incidents of gender-based violence. Oral or written reports are investigated and cases potentially referred for special procedures. However, the extent to which Kosovar women have reported rights violations and sought to use

special procedures was unclear. Since information surrounding special procedures is confidential, the OHCHR cannot follow what becomes of reported violations.

Although OHCHR closed its stand-alone office in Kosovo in 2015, the latest OHCHR report in 2019 mentioned Resolution 1325 and different aspects of human rights violations perpetrated against women and girls.¹³² This was mainstreamed throughout the report, dealing with different issues such as gender inequalities in working conditions and discrimination at work, in hiring, unemployment, property inheritance, domestic violence, representation at all levels of decision-making, including the Dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, and other vulnerabilities. The report also included a specific section dedicated to the rights of specific persons and groups, such as women, youth, children, persons with disabilities, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and “people on the move”. Women’s rights organisations, including KWN and KRCT, contributed to gender-mainstreaming and writing this report.

A second human rights body, EULEX, did not seem to have any formal system for monitoring violations of women’s and girls’ human rights, but rather monitored issues in an “*ad hoc*” manner back in 2011.¹³³ EULEX had committed to meeting women’s groups twice per year to hear their concerns.¹³⁴ And while this happened for some time, it was discontinued with changes in leadership. Nevertheless, EULEX has accepted referrals from, as well as consulted regularly with women’s organisations assisting women whose rights have been violated. Under its initial mandate, alleged violations of women’s and girls’ rights could be reported, referred, and investigated by EULEX. Over time, EULEX has continued monitoring trafficking, domestic violence, sexual violence, and rape cases, among others.¹³⁵ In 2011, EULEX was unable to provide information regarding the number of cases involving alleged gender-based crimes that it monitored as part of its mandate.¹³⁶ However, KWN’s own review of criminal cases

received by EULEX judges between 2009 and 2011 suggested that only 11 involved women victims.

Under its 2018 mandate, EULEX has a special focus on gender-based violence, according to Tagliani:

EULEX has also made gender-based violence into a specific thematic area under its monitoring functions and the Thematic Lead Monitor on Gender-based violence provides expertise through monitoring investigative actions conducted by the Kosovo police, as well as the handling of gender-based violence cases in the prosecutorial and court system. ... the Head of Mission and Deputy Head of Mission reiterated EULEX commitment towards gender equality and the fight against gender-based violence, a commitment that the Mission carries out by monitoring and assisting throughout the entire chain of institutional and non-institutional responses to domestic violence cases.¹³⁷

Unfortunately, data was unavailable on the number of cases monitored.

Since Kosovo signed a Stabilisation and Association Agreement with the EU in 2015,¹³⁸ the EU also monitors human rights in Kosovo, particularly through its annual progress reports. While these reports initially contained a very minimal gender perspective, this has improved over time. KWN and the KGSC have written commentaries on progress reports for several years, providing insight as to how the EU could better mainstream gender throughout these reports. Nowadays, the EU consults closely with women's groups when writing annual progress reports and has mainstreamed a gender perspective throughout them, highlighting women's human rights issues in various sectors.

Another human rights body, the Ombudsperson Institution in Kosovo has a Gender Equality Unit, founded in March 2005 in accordance with the Law on Gender Equality.¹³⁹ The unit advises the court on cases when necessary and later

monitors those cases as they proceed through the court. Its mandate involves addressing “discrimination on a gender basis, amending the laws and engaging in the implementation of the Law on Gender Equality,” explained Legal Counsel for Gender Equality Luljeta Domaniku.¹⁴⁰

Domaniku said her unit regularly met with KGSC, Open Door organisation, and women Lawyers’ Association Norma to identify human rights violations. Yet, when asked, “What kinds of systems do you have in place to monitor violations of women’s rights,” Kuriu and Domaniku reported poor results in 2011.

In 2010, the Ombudsperson Institution received 1,233 complaints but did not disaggregate them according to gender-based rights violations.¹⁴¹ Based on memory, Domaniku recalled four domestic violence cases in 2010. Women did report cases of sexual violence to the Ombudsperson Institution. According to procedures, women then were instructed to report their cases to the appropriate Kosovo institution. However, women hesitated, and such cases often were dropped, Domaniku said. Thus, these sensitive cases went unaddressed. Nowadays, the Ombudsperson Institution publishes reports annually, which are available online.¹⁴² Reports include various issues of concern to women and girls. Reports also provide gender-disaggregated data regarding the number of complaints filed with the Ombudsperson Institution. Thus, its systems have improved significantly, as has its working relations with women’s rights organisations on various issues ranging from gender-based discrimination at work to addressing institutional failures to treat gender-based violence.

Finally, the Office of Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities and Gender Issues in the Office of the Prime Minister, established in 2002, monitors and advises ministers on issues related to human rights. It also coordinates the Human Rights Units in all ministries. As part of their responsibilities to monitor the implementation of human rights legislation in Kosovo, they reported on the implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan on Human Rights in the Republic

of Kosovo (2009-2011), which included assessing the performance of institutions responsible for safeguarding women's and girls' human rights.¹⁴³ Although Kosovo has not yet joined the UN, through this Office the Government of Kosovo has started reporting on some international conventions recognised in Kosovo law, such as economic, social, and cultural rights.¹⁴⁴

TRAFFICKING: "BOYS WILL BE BOYS. YOU EDUCATE YOUR GIRLS."

"Since the end of the war, sex trafficking has spread like cancer."

- From the film *The Whistleblower*

"It was right after the war, 1999, and sex trafficking had not happened yet. We sat down and talked about trafficking coming to Kosovo if we didn't organise," Rogova recalled. She and other women's rights activists attended a meeting with KFOR, UNMIK, and various international organisations:

UNMIK representatives were like, "No, trafficking cannot happen."

Women's organisations said, "Let's get together, and let's talk about this now to prevent it from coming."

And UNMIK people said, "How do you know that it will happen?"

We said, "Because in Bosnia and Herzegovina it happened after the war." We gave examples of how trafficking can happen.

Two hours later a high official in KFOR, stood, grabbed his notebook, and on the way out said, "Boys will be boys. You educate your girls."

For us it was a sign of what KFOR believed: "No matter Resolution 1325, no matter any regulation, we are going to do what we need to do. Our boys need sex."¹⁴⁵

Sex trafficking in post-war Kosovo is perhaps the clearest example of international actors failing to prevent, monitor, report, and refer violations of women's and girls' rights.¹⁴⁶ From the beginning, it appeared that there would be no consideration of sex trafficking as a crime and no intention to punish it.

The large and predominantly male international presence in Kosovo immediately after the war was a key factor in the increased demand for sex services, facilitating the trafficking of women and girls to, from, and through Kosovo.¹⁴⁷ "This crime started to appear when the troops came in," said UNMIK Police Gender Advisor Stroosnijder. Former Police General Director Selimi agreed:

The international presence has played a huge part in human trafficking and the trafficking of women. The fact that they did not have their families close and that they were rich in comparison to the locals helped increase trafficking and prostitution. UNMIK's mechanism to control illegal migration was never functional. Everyone came in and went out until we locals took responsibility of the borders.¹⁴⁸

That military and "peacekeeping" forces contribute to the proliferation of trafficking has been well-documented by various international human rights monitors.¹⁴⁹ The rapid increase of reported cases in Kosovo corresponded with the plethora of peacekeepers in Kosovo. Women's rights activist Simić recalled:

My first experience with KFOR soldiers was them catcalling me when I was 15 years old. They were British Troops. I entered adulthood with these experiences. I started to understand what trafficking was ... Lines of KFOR trucks in front of those buildings. Nothing was done about it. Those were my first experiences as a young girl.¹⁵⁰

Thus, some young women in Kosovo did not feel protected by the so-called peacekeepers.

"I was forced by the boss to serve international soldiers and police officers" a trafficked woman told Amnesty International.¹⁵¹ Case after case documented by Amnesty International offers evidence from the lives of women and girls trafficked from Moldova, Bulgaria, the Ukraine, and beyond to Kosovo's sex industry.

This patently violated not only the law, but also the UN Secretary-General's calls for "international, national and non-State security actors" to be "responsive to and held to account for any violations of the rights of women and girls, in line with international standards." Any "sexual exploitation and abuse allegedly perpetrated by uniformed, civilian peacekeepers and/or humanitarian workers" must be acted upon, and security actors must take precautions towards prevention.¹⁵²

UNMIK promulgated a Regulation on the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons in Kosovo in January 2001.¹⁵³ The Regulation criminalised both traffickers and those knowingly using the services of trafficked women. UNMIK established a National Plan of Action on Trafficking, replaced by a new governmental plan in 2011.¹⁵⁴ The Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo and Criminal Code of Kosovo forbid human trafficking, while several other applicable laws also deal with trafficking, such as the Law on combatting and preventing trafficking in human beings and protecting victims of trafficking, supported by EULEX, adopted in 2013.¹⁵⁵

The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings establishes a five year mandatory minimum sentence for those guilty of trafficking,¹⁵⁶ and the Criminal Code of Kosovo has been aligned with this.¹⁵⁷ Additionally, the EU framework added more provisions for the protection of women victims of trafficking to include physical, psychological, and social recovery. Both the EU and Kosovo offer translation and interpreting services, legal counselling, and information related to their rights and services available, secure housing, and psychological and medical assistance.¹⁵⁸ In Kosovo, however, these benefits have been subject to the availability of donor contributions "made specifically for this purpose and recorded as designated donor grants in the Kosovo Consolidated Budget."¹⁵⁹ Both national strategies and action plans sought to promote long term reintegration services for victims of trafficking, which includes educational and employment services.

Police receive training and established a specialised anti-trafficking unit in 2004, which led to the closing of some locales involved in prostitution.¹⁶⁰ Members of the justice system also received some training. Kosovo established a National Anti-Trafficking Coordinator to "coordinate, monitor and report on the implementation of policies against trafficking in human beings," a secretariat to support the coordinator, an inter-ministerial working group, as well as other institutions tasked with responsibilities related to addressing trafficking and its consequences.¹⁶¹

An attempt at prevention was the "Off Limits" list, created in January 2001.¹⁶² With time, the initial 75 bars and premises listed as "off limits" for UNMIK, KFOR, and OSCE personnel swelled to 200-some locations allegedly involved in prostitution. Most institutions also installed training for personnel and codes of conduct that frowned upon the use of sexual services. Whether these attempts at prevention had the desired effect is unclear. Kuriu of OHCHR felt preventative efforts were successful:

The high-profile response in terms of preventing trafficking after the conflict in Kosovo was a very good and coordinated response by international actors. There were funds related to combatting trafficking and it showed great results. In the beginning it was very much reported that internationals were the main ones involved in terms of demand when it came to trafficking services but then it dropped drastically due to successful policies introduced by UNMIK and KFOR.¹⁶³

Other research participants were not convinced that preventative efforts changed existing behaviours. "People could have gone or not gone," a participant said. "No one was checking."¹⁶⁴ It was not until 2002 that some workers perhaps took the "Off Limits" list more seriously, a former OSCE employee said:

I certainly knew about people going to off-limit bars, but this was at a time when there was a bit of a grey area; the off-limit list was something that was informal. It wasn't until there was a very clear pronouncement: "Look these are off-limits, and if you go there your contract could be terminated." Once the list became serious, I never really heard of people going. It doesn't mean they didn't. It's just I didn't hear about it.¹⁶⁵

He felt that some "bad apples" would engage in prostitution and other deplorable behaviour regardless of preventative institutional measures. Some "marginal people who engage in illegal acts do it either when their judgment is slightly impaired or there's an opportunistic moment." Those who might be convinced to participate in illegal acts by such "bad apples" might refrain with a policy in place.

First-hand experiences of women's rights activists like Rogova suggest that prevention efforts simply encouraged trafficking to go underground or elsewhere:

What they were doing in 2002 was that the military organised special bus trips for soldiers to other countries. So, they showed that in Kosovo they were not involved in trafficking, but they were doing what they "had to do" in another country. I saw with my own eyes the American military organise sex trips to Sofia, Bulgaria, where the minute they arrived in the hotel there were women waiting for them. It was organised. I have seen German military in Tetova, Macedonia. Suddenly they decided not to get involved in trafficking in Kosovo because there was so much pressure: "Don't do it!" So, they started organising in Macedonia. Meaning: boys will be boys, still today.¹⁶⁶

An UNMIK official agreed, "When efforts were made to regulate, demand shifted to neighbouring countries."

As of 2011, international institutions did not seem to use the off-limits list anymore. EULEX did not adopt the list used by UNMIK. Their prevention efforts consisted of training staff about trafficking and installing a "strict Code of Conduct" that forbade the purchase of sex services.¹⁶⁷

At that time, EULEX staff believed the "police force is very professional" and would not be involved in such activities. Yet a former EULEX staff member was not entirely convinced. "It is difficult for me to see how effective this type of Code of Conduct or training really can be," Rautio said. "I think reasonable people hear the lecture; they understand the policy. But then I don't know how much this kind of lecture or policy helps those who are misbehaving." Only "real accountability works," she said, "showing that you are serious by using the sanctions available to the mission."

In 2020, EULEX staff still were required to follow the Mission Code of Conduct, as well as other internal Standard Operating Procedures, such as on sexual harassment. Procedures exist to investigate and adjudicate any failures to follow these.¹⁶⁸

Initially the UNMIK Regulation, and later the Criminal Code, did enable investigations, raids, and bar checks. One of the first investigations into trafficking in Kosovo occurred in July 2001. UNMIK launched an investigation regarding allegations that a Romanian woman and two U.S. UNMIK police officers were collaborating with a brothel owner in Mitrovica to traffic women. The internal report by the head of the regional police unit warned, "the whole credibility of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo Police is in question."¹⁶⁹ The report alleged that one U.S. officer had been picking up trafficked women on the boundary between Kosovo and Serbia while in uniform, and while driving an UNMIK police car. A second U.S. police officer allegedly warned the owner that a police investigation was underway and divulged police information about previous trafficking and prostitution operations.

How many uniformed and civilian peacekeepers were accused of sexual exploitation and abuse in Kosovo and what became of them? Between 2002 and April 2004 the UNMIK Police Trafficking in Persons Investigation Unit found:

52 KFOR soldiers, 3 international police and 8 international civilians from various agencies in "off limits premises". The KFOR soldiers were handed over to the Military Police and the civilian staff to their respective departments for further investigation and appropriate disciplinary action. In accordance with the UNMIK Police regulations, the international police officers were repatriated to their home countries.¹⁷⁰

In 2003, ten police officers were either repatriated or dismissed due to allegations related to trafficking, and 22 to 27 KFOR officers were suspected of committing offences related to trafficking.¹⁷¹ What became of them afterward is unknown.

UNMIK later established a Conduct and Disciplinary Unit in 2006, a complaint mechanism responsible for implementing a "zero tolerance policy". Between 2006 and 2011, UNMIK recorded only two cases of misconduct involving

sexual exploitation.¹⁷² Both were referred and investigated but insufficient evidence meant that allegations were found to be “unsubstantiated.”

When we asked UNMIK what would happen in the hypothetical situation that a staff member would be accused of using prostitution services or assaulting a woman, Thais Santa Cruz answered:

The steps would vary depending on the category of personnel involved (i.e., civilian or uniformed personnel), but would generally involve an assessment of the allegation; an assignment for investigation; and, interim measures. If the allegation is substantiated, there are administrative and disciplinary sanctions taken by the United Nations against the involved subject, or by the Member State if the alleged subject is a uniformed personnel. The United Nations may repatriate the individuals concerned on disciplinary grounds and ban them from future participation in peacekeeping operations. Disciplinary sanctions and any other judicial actions, which may include criminal accountability or civil accountability related to child support, remain the responsibility of the domestic jurisdiction of the individual involved. Member States are required to keep the Secretariat informed of the progress and outcome of investigations, as well as of any disciplinary or administrative action taken at the domestic level.¹⁷³

Between 2010 and 2020, no cases involving uniformed personnel were recorded by UNMIK. However, there were two cases involving civilian staff in 2013. Both cases were investigated. One case was found to be unsubstantiated and therefore closed. The second, substantiated case resulted in the individual’s dismissal from the UN, a fine, and jail time in the person’s home country.¹⁷⁴

In addition to its zero-tolerance policy, UNMIK also has adopted other preventive measures, such as mandatory online trainings for all categories of UNMIK personnel on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse, induction trainings provided to all newly arrived personnel in the mission, and distribution of material with details for reporting allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse.

With regard to other peacekeepers and humanitarian workers,¹⁷⁵ KFOR did not respond to our request for information in 2011 or in 2020 pertaining to whether they had any alleged cases of sexual exploitation. In 2020, they stated, "This question does not apply, so we can't provide you with an answer".

Nor would EULEX provide information as to whether any personnel had been accused of engagement in prostitution or trafficking as this information was "confidential". Cases of humanitarian workers' alleged involvement in sexual misconduct were reported in media, such as the 2005 indictment of UNHCR official Rashidoon Khan on "charges of sexual exploitation of minors under 16 years of age and human trafficking."¹⁷⁶ Overall, however, insufficient access to data and perhaps some institutions' poor data collection practices made it difficult to quantify the number of cases referred and acted upon.¹⁷⁷

It seems that peacekeepers who used prostitution services or pimped, involving themselves in trafficking, were seldom prosecuted. The Kosovo Police had their hands tied because both civilian and military peacekeepers enjoyed diplomatic immunity. By definition, "the person of a diplomatic agent shall be inviolable. He shall not be liable to any form of arrest or detention."¹⁷⁸ "He," notably, cannot be tried for crimes allegedly committed in Kosovo even after the expiration of "his" mandate. Thus, KFOR and UNMIK personnel remained immune from any form of arrest or detention by any State other than their sending State. This exemption continues through the expiration of their mandate and after personnel are no longer employed by KFOR or UNMIK.¹⁷⁹ The fact that security actors

were contracted coupled with their diplomatic immunity made accountability challenging, a former OSCE official elaborated:

Here's the general issue of using contractors to bring police officers in. This, to me is a big, big problem. The film *The Whistleblower* was largely accurate. Contractors did all the contracts for police officers and OSCE. They're a defence contractor, and the U.S. State Department decides that they don't want to create a contractual relationship with the Americans going to these missions. So, they hire CPI, Civilian Police International, or they hire DynCorp or any of these companies to be the intermediary, so they don't have to create this relationship. What ends up happening is that when you're hired by a company, but yet you work for somebody else, you've got not only this mixed loyalty, but who do you listen to? Do you listen to the person who is writing your paycheck or do you listen to the person that on paper you're supposed to report to?¹⁸⁰

Despite its responsibilities to implement Resolution 1325,¹⁸¹ the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) seemingly has been reluctant to waive diplomatic immunity granted to civilian and military peacekeepers. DPKO fears that countries might pull funding or troops from peacekeeping missions, a former UN official with first-hand knowledge commented:

In the summer of 2001 the Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights tried to adopt a resolution in the UN which would have bound the secretariat to look into the issue,¹⁸² and at the very least to include in people's contract that, "Even if you have immunity, your home country would agree to prosecute you." I remember that people in DPKO said, "No way." Why? Because they received such pressure

from the member states. DPKO and the UN in general have to be quite careful as to how much they push issues of accountability because they of course need troop contributing nations. For the next crisis, whether it's all humanitarian or whether it's military, they need people to go into these areas to perform these functions, and if states say, "look no way," then peacekeeping is over.

Thus, towards implementing Resolution 1325, member states must play a greater role in addressing impunity. UNMIK Police Gender Advisor Stroosnijder agreed:

Policies and directives were adopted, and a zero [tolerance] policy was implemented, but I would like to see an accurate follow up and transparency when cases occur. Now perpetrators are removed from missions but seen in other missions. This should not happen ... Still we need improvement at the DPKO level in cooperation with the member states so that these officers are not able to join missions anymore, and they should be sentenced by home country laws.

We struggled to learn what happened to the dozens of peacekeepers and humanitarian workers allegedly involved in sexual exploitation and abuse in Kosovo, scouring newspapers, internet sources, and reports. It was difficult to tell what happens after repatriation. Diplomatic immunity enabled peacekeepers from certain countries to receive less than a "slap on the wrist" after committing several crimes, an inside source told us. According to this source, UNMIK often turned a blind eye towards cases, particularly if the perpetrator was no longer a member of their staff.

Back in 2011, in only two identifiable cases was there some form of justice. One involved UNHCR official Rashidoon Khan, convicted of sexually abusing under-aged girls in Kosovo, human trafficking, and selling narcotics in 2005.¹⁸³ His was the

first such case treated within Kosovo, but he was sentenced to only three years in a Kosovo prison. The second was the infamous case of Sgt. Frank J. Ronghi. Ronghi was an American peacekeeper serving in Kosovo. He was investigated, tried, and found guilty of "committing indecent acts with" and murdering an 11-year-old girl. "It's easy to get away with this in a third world country," he had told witness Private First Class Michael J. Stegemolloer. "He knew because he had done it in the desert."¹⁸⁴ Indeed, cases of peacekeepers and aid workers sexually exploiting women and girls exist in Sudan, Côte d'Ivoire, Haiti, Liberia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Cambodia, and Eritrea, to name a few.¹⁸⁵ However, the Ronghi case was exemplary, a former OSCE official felt:

This is a good example of how the system is supposed to work, in the sense that this soldier had immunity. This soldier was certainly never going to be prosecuted in Kosovo. The American military did what they call an Article 32 hearing, basically a grand jury where they determine whether there is enough *prima facie* evidence to have a trial. That was held here in Kosovo at Camp Bondsteel. It's my understanding that they just picked serving officers to sit on this. They determined, "Yep, there's enough evidence to have a court martial." So, they sent the guy back to Germany, and they had a full court martial. He was convicted, and now he's serving life without parole in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.¹⁸⁶

This is the kind of example that the UN should be setting. Okay, we understand in some countries both the individual who may have committed a crime and their country might not want them to be tried in a country where there are numerous legal problems. There may be huge biases in the legal system against internationals. But then you as a country have the responsibility to prosecute your national. So, the UN should cooperate with prosecutors in the home country

and help gather the information they need in order to conduct a proper trial.

UNMIK's aforementioned action to ensure punishment also shows some progress.

Despite all the talk about EULEX efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking,¹⁸⁷ according to the available criminal court summaries, EULEX only completed three cases that included trafficking charges.¹⁸⁸ In one case, three men were convicted of rape, trafficking, and facilitating the prostitution of a 15 and a 17-year-old girl. Their aggregated punishments for these crimes were twelve, ten, and twelve years' imprisonment, respectively.¹⁸⁹

In conclusion, extensive evidence suggests that Kosovo saw a significant rise in organised prostitution in 1999, which accompanied the arrival of thousands of primarily male KFOR troops and UNMIK personnel. Loose border control by UNMIK and KFOR and insufficient protection mechanisms immediately after the war created an enabling environment for trafficking to occur. While preventative efforts like training and the off-limits list may have discouraged some from frequenting establishments, research participants tended to feel that others would use sexual services in any case. Still in 2020, quantitatively it is impossible to measure the number of alleged cases due to poor data collection, a lack of institutional memory, and "confidentiality." While some improvements exist, justice may remain rare considering diplomatic immunity and the slowness of most UN member states to prosecute.

“WHO CARED ABOUT DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?”

"Who cared about domestic violence? There were so many priorities back then... how to establish new institutions, good governance, political rights... and domestic violence was not considered a priority. However, when we talk about half the population's security in their private lives, of course it's a priority."

- Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, former OSCE gender focal point, 2011

Sakibe Doli was working the night shift at the women's shelter. So far it had been a quiet, uneventful night. The women and children who had suffered domestic violence slept quietly in the shelter, presumably protected from prior perpetrators of violence. The shelter's location was supposed to be secret, but in the small town of Gjakova word had spread fast, and soon even taxi drivers knew how to find it. This particular night the silence engulfing the shelter was suddenly broken by the thumping of loud music. Sakibe peered outside between the curtains. It was one of the husbands of the women she was charged to protect. As his car neared, the music became louder. Neighbours came to their windows and began telephoning Sakibe to ask, "What is happening?"

She called the police, and they responded quickly. A police car quietly pulled up behind the man's vehicle, lights off, attempting to catch the man with an element of surprise. When

the police car turned on its lights, they swept through the darkness and onto the man's car. He was caught. The policewoman arrested him on charges of disturbing the peace and breaking his protection order. As he was escorted into the squad car a smug smirk spread across his face. He knew that the consequences of his actions would be minimal. The court later found him guilty, and he was sentenced to prison.

However, a short time later he reappeared at the shelter and continued threatening shelter staff, including Sakibe.¹⁹⁰ "We are afraid, as a shelter, when we face a violator," she said in 2007. "During the first five years police reacted very fast when we called them. We didn't have to worry, 'Are they coming or not?' But now it is different. It has happened that a violator had connections with someone within the Kosovo Police, and they didn't come at all." An investigation of this incident later led to the dismissal of the police captain and commander. "With the new hierarchy in the Gjakova police, cooperation is very good. After what happened in the past, everything runs smoothly," Sakibe said in 2011.¹⁹¹

As elsewhere in the world, domestic violence has continued to threaten the physical and psychological security of women and girls. Domestic violence has remained persistent and pervasive in post-war Kosovo.¹⁹² Consistently, more women than men have experienced domestic violence.¹⁹³ Meanwhile, perpetrators of domestic violence have tended to be men.¹⁹⁴

The crime of domestic violence requires complex responses, as women's security is intertwined with the security of their communities. Protecting women from violence and preventing future violence depend on women's trust of the police; sufficient police training; reducing privately owned small weapons; the implementation of laws; available, victim-centred rehabilitation services; the allocation of adequate resources; and an effective justice system. Shelters are crucial for offering temporary protection, and women require resources towards living independently.

Who protects women?

"If we identify a domestic violence case, arresting the offender is within our duty, but we also need to find a way to resolve the case. In one case the woman who reported six years' continuous abuse asked, 'What do you offer me? How would you help me if I report the violence?'

'We have the law and provisions for shelter.'

'But for how long can I stay in the shelter?'

'Six months and you have good conditions.'

'What will the court do? If the children remain with me, what will I be offered? Who will take care of my children? I don't work. Will I be offered work?'

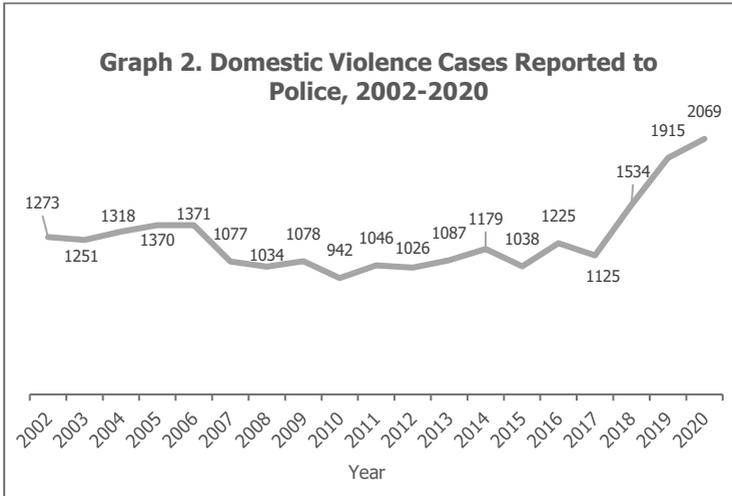
We as [the Kosovo Police] find it difficult to implement our side. It's difficult to reach equality because the woman wants to be independent from the man, but we cannot offer this.¹⁹⁵

- Lieutenant Tahire Haxholli, 2011

In a 2008 Kosovo-wide survey, nearly 40 percent of the respondents who had suffered violence did not tell anyone. This decreased to 7 percent in 2015.¹⁹⁶ While it has improved with time, underreporting still makes it difficult to estimate accurately the magnitude of domestic violence in Kosovo.¹⁹⁷ At first glance, this crime appeared to be decreasing back in 2010 (see Graph 2). This was not the case, and police data suggest a clear increase in reporting in recent years.

The number of cases reported to the Kosovo Police skyrocketed in 2020. Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, women were isolated together with possible perpetrators. Officer Shala reflected, "The violence significantly increased these days. Not that it did not exist earlier, but now [the number of cases] was

huge. The lockdown was like a bomb, and it didn't take long [for reporting] to explode."¹⁹⁸



Concerningly, between 2000 and 2020, 44 women and girls allegedly were murdered within a domestic relationship, according to the Kosovo Police.¹⁹⁹

Moreover, police statistics never provide the full picture, as people may not always report violence to institutions. Back in 2008, the same Kosovo-wide survey suggested that 43 percent of Kosovars have suffered some form of domestic violence in their lifetimes (46 percent of women and nearly 40 percent of men).²⁰⁰ One reason for underreporting, not unique to Kosovo, is that people historically considered domestic violence a private matter and felt that it was shameful to speak openly about it (82 percent).²⁰¹ Women hesitated to report domestic violence out of concern for public embarrassment, stigmatisation, or because they erroneously felt that the crime was their fault. More concretely, women feared retaliation from perpetrators or losing custody of their children. They often are forced by economic inequality to

depend on their husbands' income to survive and care for children, a subordination that prevents them from leaving violent home situations. In prior years, they did not know that laws existed to protect them and often did not know their rights.

With intense outreach efforts by Kosovo institutions, international actors, and civil society, such views have begun to shift. By 2015, the perception that domestic violence is a private matter had begun to change, though it still existed among 31 percent of research participants.²⁰² While better than 2008, the OSCE's 2019 survey suggested that 48 percent of women still believed that domestic violence was a private matter. Indeed, when violence was perpetrated by their current partner, 87 percent did not report it to the police or any other organisation.²⁰³

Meanwhile, when asked about their experiences with domestic violence, in 2015, 68 percent of women and 56 percent of men declared that they had suffered domestic violence in their lifetimes. This increase compared to 2008 could be attributed to better awareness of various forms of domestic violence and more willingness to speak about this topic.²⁰⁴ While not entirely comparable, in 2019, 57 percent of women said they had experienced psychological, physical, or sexual violence at the hands of an intimate partner or non-partner since the age of 15.²⁰⁵

Kosovo now has a rather comprehensive legal framework for addressing domestic violence. The Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo imports international human rights standards in legislating against domestic violence. In 2020, it was amended to reference the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, known as the Istanbul Convention. The Law on Protection against Domestic Violence defines domestic violence and outlines the use of protection orders, the responsibilities of law enforcement, criminal offences, and proceedings.²⁰⁶ Previously, the Criminal Code mentioned crimes committed within a domestic relationship, such as light

or grievous bodily harm, coercion, threat, unlawful deprivation of liberty, sexual assault, and rape.²⁰⁷ These were treated as crimes regardless of whether they occurred in a domestic relationship or externally. Then, in 2019, the Criminal Code was amended to include domestic violence as a separate criminal offence. A National Strategy and Action Plan against Domestic Violence was adopted in 2011, and another Kosovo Strategy on Protection against Domestic Violence and Action Plan (2016-2020) followed it. Through a consultative process led by AGE, institutions and other relevant institutions collaborated to establish Standard Operating Procedures for assisting cases of domestic violence. Since 2013, these Standard Operating Procedures have helped improve the institutional response and inter-institutional coordination.

“When you don’t have a document, it is hard to act,” Lieutenant Haxholli reflected. “These have helped a lot.”²⁰⁸ Some municipalities and regions also have established inter-institutional coordination mechanisms to support cases, though their role is not yet clearly legislated and thus their performance remains mixed.²⁰⁹

While in prior years the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare provided only partial institutional funding for women’s shelters, this also improved over time following lobbying by women’s rights groups, supported by the Security Gender Group, which paved the way for an earmarked budget line for shelters in 2019 and 2020. Overall, Kosovo’s legislation related to domestic violence is largely in line with international standards, as requested by the UN Secretary-General.²¹⁰ However, some improvements could further align it with the Istanbul Convention, particularly related to rehabilitation and reintegration services.²¹¹

Establishing and honing the legal framework towards tackling impunity and preventing gender-based violence was perhaps one of the most significant accomplishments in the last two decades towards safeguarding women’s security, as per Resolution 1325. Qosaj Mustafa collaborated with diverse institutions in drafting the original UNMIK Regulation on

Protection against Domestic Violence while at the OSCE. She recalled the crucial changes the legislation effected when it entered into force in 2003:

It's a success story because I remember being called by international police officers who had to deal with cases of domestic violence. For example, if a woman was sheltered, her husband would come to the shelter and do whatever he wanted because there were no protection orders. They couldn't actually implement any protection mechanisms until she went through the process of divorce and custody. When she was an immediate victim of domestic violence, there was not much that could be done.

When the law was signed by the Special Representative to the Secretary-General, the first call we received the very next day was from one of these international police officers. There was this guy who had been annoying them for months. The minute the police would leave, he would go and harass the victim. It was a very heavy case of domestic violence. She was in the shelter with kids, and the kids were terrified as soon as they saw the car and their father driving around the shelter.

The police officers had been calling me all the time saying, "What happened with the Regulation? Can we have these protection orders?"

"No, it's still a draft."

It was probably lying for a couple months on the shelves of some UN legal advisor, but after four months it was signed. This woman immediately requested a protection order. The guy was informed that he had a protection order against him, but he violated it because he was a violent person. He went again around the shelter, but this time he had a temporary measure not to approach the victim within 150 meters, or they could arrest him.

These were small steps, but you could feel that some things were changing slowly. Initially not many judges knew of the law, but after some time there were hundreds of these protection orders being assigned.²¹² It is some form of protection.²¹³

With the law established, the next step was to ensure training for security sector and justice personnel on how to address gender-based violence.²¹⁴ Women must be able to trust police and courts in order to request protection. The police and courts need to understand the reticence, fear, and vulnerability of women victims. Within the justice sector, in 2011 Enver Peci, Chair of the Kosovo Judicial Council, said that “trainings are done based on necessity”:

At the beginning of the year, the themes for the trainings are selected and shown to the judges. Whoever is interested in a particular training applies. The trainings are obligatory. If judges don't put to practice or abide by what they have been taught during trainings, a disciplinary prosecutor follows the case.²¹⁵

Thus, judges' training related to gender-based violence has been *ad hoc* rather than mandatory, though it has been a “priority” topic in recent years. This includes training on domestic violence legislation. While judges specialised in treating domestic violence cases were appointed and more training provided, some judges still lacked knowledge because training was optional rather than obligatory.

The Kosovo Police allocates seven out of 40 hours of annual mandatory training to gender equality, and the two-month Lieutenant training also includes four to five days on the subject. Training deals with the Law on Gender Equality; the police strategy on women's rights as human rights; trafficking; handling domestic violence cases; and Resolution 1325.²¹⁶ “The Resolution makes up a percentage of our training,” said Shala.

"If the training lasts longer, training on the Resolution will be extended as well."²¹⁷ Units specialised in domestic violence and trafficking receive additional mandatory training. "The course on abuse within the family is a specific one for investigators who work with abuse in the family," Lieutenant Haxholli said.

In addition, community policing has sought to prevent domestic violence, former Police General Director Selimi said:

It is routine to go and get information about a family that has problems, and our units go and talk not like officers, but "man to man." This is the essence of the new police service in Kosovo. We are not police who before everything else use force in every case, but we use other mechanisms to resolve problems. This used to be an absurd concept for police. Before, they just went and made an arrest. But now we have other methods.²¹⁸

Police investigations of alleged crimes, policies, and new mechanisms perhaps have had some deterrent effect on potential future violence. Security actors made great strides in protecting women, contributing not only to the implementation of Resolution 1325, former UNDP Resident Representative Osnat Lubrani said, but also to the improvement of community safety in general:

The engagement between gender equality advocates and security actors, whether in the Kosovo Police, the Kosovo Protection Corps, or the establishment of community safety services at the municipal level, has led to increased awareness of women's security concerns. We've seen more training to sensitise law enforcement personnel on gender issues and ensure their appropriate response to domestic violence, including through better control of firearms possession. Also, the adoption of gender equality policies and strategies by security institutions, and the

creation of gender units to support and monitor their implementation, is a very positive development.²¹⁹

Specific to Kosovo is a long history of distrust for state institutions and law enforcement agents, ranging from the Ottoman Empire to oppression under the Serbian regime.²²⁰ Historically, Kosovars have relied more on the family than on the state for protection and thus hesitate to forfeit weapons held for family protection. Ironically these weapons make women more vulnerable to domestic violence and violence by firearms.²²¹ Every year weapons are used to commit crimes within domestic relationships.²²² However, insufficient national data collection systems make it difficult to assess accurately the correlation between violence against women and illicit arms.²²³ As “small arms and light weapons can proliferate and are often used to threaten women” in post-conflict areas, the UN Secretary-General calls for national mechanisms that control these weapons towards enhancing security for women.²²⁴

Between 2007 and 2010, UNDP’s Kosovo Small Arms Control Initiative brought together institutions to devise an action plan for implementing a Kosovo Small Arms Control Strategy.²²⁵ As part of this strategy, the Ministry of Internal Affairs is responsible for researching via survey the extent of small arms in Kosovo and then comparing this with crime statistics from the Kosovo Police.²²⁶

Since then, UNDP has continued supporting the Kosovo Police to better tackle illicit arms trafficking and their illegal possession through capacity development and technological upgrades in line with international standards. According to Marta K. Gazideda from UNDP:

[This initiative] supported Kosovo institutions to control the widespread possession and circulation of small arms and light weapons in accordance with UN, OSCE, and EU standards, its impact on domestic violence with interventions at institutional and

community level, and supported the development of the relevant legal framework, strategies, and action plans, to increase public safety. It strengthened Kosovo institutions and other relevant actors' capacities on crime prevention, community safety, and mainstreaming gender-sensitive practices and policies in Small Arms and Light Weapons control interventions.²²⁷

This has included supporting the development of the Prosecutors' Guidelines on Combating Gun Violence, the Tracing Assessment Report, and Standard Operating Procedures for firearm tracing, including establishing a Firearms Focal Point, which has become a best practice for the region and beyond. This includes linking several key firearm-related databases, and mapping the structure of illicit firearm trafficking.²²⁸

In 2016, UNDP conducted a study on Small Arms and Light Weapons in the Western Balkans, including "gender differentiated aspects of firearms and the connection between gender and armed violence in Kosovo."²²⁹ It found that from 2012 to 2015, men perpetrated 97 percent of the incidents that involved firearms. Of all homicides involving a firearm, 44 percent had male victims; 37 percent of femicide cases were caused by firearms; and "63 percent of all armed attacks on women took place in their home or yard". Moreover, "44 percent of murders occurred within the domestic context, and 75 percent of these murders were committed using a firearm."²³⁰

Additional, Kosovo-specific research on the issue was planned, as Gusia explained:

Of concern to the lives of men and women in Kosovo is the presence of weapons. Every month, there is a case where small weapons are used. Not only women, but also men, are equally affected by the presence of weapons. We made a request to UNDP to conduct

Kosovo-wide research on this matter, as we are concerned about the fact that there are so many weapons in Kosovo.²³¹

The research, planned for 2020, was postponed due to COVID-19.

Meanwhile, the Kosovo Police also have established trained domestic violence units in each municipality to deal specifically with domestic violence. "This includes a policy where each police station must have a woman and a man," Haxholli said.²³² Qualified policewomen interview women and children victims who may find it easier to "communicate with women than men," Shala said. Policewomen conduct interviews, take photographs of injuries, and assist women who have suffered violence.

"Women have it easier to talk to other women about their problems and issues than to men," said Selimi.

Outreach campaigns by women's organisations, institutions, media, and international actors to educate the population about their rights may have also encouraged reporting. "I think the reports have to do with trust," Shala said. "They are reported, given the trust people have towards us." He continued:

I think that our society has increased awareness and citizens are reporting more cases now. ... I believe that these cases existed before, but they were not reported. So, I cannot say that there is an increase in cases, but there is an increase in information and reporting.

More women in police, police outreach efforts, media coverage of the issue, shelters' assistance offered to victims, and training all contributed to reporting.

While reporting increased between 2003 and 2006, it declined after 2006. Women's rights activists attributed this not to a decrease in domestic violence, but rather to a loss of trust in the justice system. "Women were reporting domestic

violence, but then they lost trust in institutions when no action was taken,” Rogova said. Police investigations have limited impact if the justice system does not hand down firm sentences for perpetrators. The fact that reporting has increased in recent years, may signal both increased awareness and trust in institutions. Nevertheless, reporting remains low compared to prevalence. Distrust in institutions, a lack of financial independence, slow response of justice institutions, and low sentencing may still deter women from seeking help. Here the police and judiciary still have work ahead in “combating impunity and creating a deterrent effect,” as per the UN Secretary-General’s guidance.²³³

“Justice is far away”

"I don't think that there is much progress in combating violence against women, especially domestic violence. Not many cases have been prosecuted."

- Arbena Kuriu, OHCHR, 2011

On 18 May 2011, 27-year-old Diana Kastrati was walking to the University of Pristina.²³⁴ The last few years had been tough, but with courage and support from her family she had left her abusive husband. The Kosovo Police helped her request a protection order against him, and now she only had to wait for the judge to approve it. The judge was late; days had passed since it should have been approved, but Diana had high hopes that she would soon be guaranteed safety. The battle over custody of her eight-year-old daughter might take more time as she had to prove she would be financially capable of raising a child. A university education would open new doors, she thought, as she walked by the gas station near her home that morning. Suddenly gun shots rang out. Diana died instantly. Her husband disappeared.

Diana's tragic death underlined the fact that protection for women is still inadequate. The Law on Protection against Domestic Violence was unable to prevent violence and save her life, as the judge failed to provide the protection order in time. Protecting women and preventing future violence entails ensuring access to justice when women's rights are violated.²³⁵ However, judges' tendency to forgive men's violent behaviour has prevailed.²³⁶ For example, when a perpetrator said that "the marriage would end then and there because his wife reported him," the judge's sentiment was telling:

The police shouldn't have arrested [the perpetrator]; they didn't think what would happen to the couple. Now she is divorced. We have to respect that there is a patriarchal society here. The police shouldn't arrest him even though the woman accused him. Both of them should be kept together in the police station and not to arrest the husband or anything similar that could impact their marriage and lead to divorce.²³⁷

The judge failed to recognise the rights and safety needs of the victim, preferring to safeguard the family unit. The possibility of unfair trials dissuades women from filing cases or testifying,²³⁸ as well as contributes to a general lack of faith in institutions.²³⁹ "Many of the victims have let go of the cases because they felt betrayed, unprotected, and simply not safe," Naime Sherifi, who led a women's shelter, said.

Women also fear losing custody of their children. In the event of divorce, the custody, care, and education of children is decided in court.²⁴⁰ The court investigates all relevant circumstances and decides whether the custody will be granted to one parent, both parents (shared), or to a third party.²⁴¹ The fact that women are underemployed compared to men affects the proportion of cases in which courts award custody to women. Judges tend to grant child custody to men as more financially "suitable" caretakers, sometimes despite a history of violence. Moreover, court orders for men to pay for child support are rare and seldom enforced.²⁴² Vuniqi said:

Problems regarding child support payments have always existed. There were cases in which the mother would deliberately choose to stay in the marriage only because the sole custody for the child would have been given to the father if they divorced. Men find more work and have greater economic power, which is why they often gain custody of the children.²⁴³

Although she felt the situation was slowly changing, women's financial dependence on men family members has continued to prevent women from seeking justice. According to Haxholli:

80 percent of women who have experienced violence are economically dependent and do not have a profession, which is a big problem. Most of the reported cases are families who live with the help of social assistance. Even after the alimony is set, the perpetrator [in these cases] doesn't have a monthly salary for the alimony to be withdrawn. How can the victim survive? The state does not provide any assistance or ... work, and this continues to be a big problem.²⁴⁴

For women who do report violence, often the future is grim with witness protection programs and rehabilitation programs still not functioning well.²⁴⁵ Low sentencing also fails to prevent repeat violence, Sherifi said:

These people have to get longer sentences. We had this case of a husband who heated up a screwdriver and burned and tortured his wife in a very sadistic way. He burned her genitals with other instruments, the woman he spent 18 years with! And he was only sentenced to nine years imprisonment? That is not enough!

Assessing quantitatively women's access to justice has remained challenging considering insufficient data collection systems.²⁴⁶ No publicly available national registry of cases exists for the justice system, so examining cases as they are proceeded from police to prosecution to courts is not possible. Nor was it easy to assess judges' sentencing practices specifically for gender-based violence related crimes. Data collection systems within the justice system are particularly inadequate when it comes to collecting gender-disaggregated

data relevant to various crimes involving gender-based violence.

EULEX's record-keeping systems for gender-based crimes were not much better as of 2011. If they maintained such data, EULEX representatives were unable to respond to requests for information in a timely manner. Therefore, KWN manually counted cases posted on the EULEX website. Only three of the 189 criminal cases involved domestic violence; in these, men murdered their wives.²⁴⁷ Their sentences were three and a half years, 10 years, and 15 years imprisonment, respectively.²⁴⁸ The relatively few domestic violence crimes cases treated may be attributed in part to the fact that only one out of 2,500 initial police officers in EULEX dealt specifically with domestic violence cases, back when EULEX had executive competencies in 2011.²⁴⁹ Within civil courts where rulings on protection orders occur, none of the 117 cases monitored by EULEX related to women, mentioned women, or involved women as of 2011.²⁵⁰

Following the aforementioned change in EULEX's mandate, criminal offences involving domestic violence did not fall within the exclusive competence of the Mission but only within the subsidiary competence. As such, they needed a request by the parties involved for EULEX judges to take the cases. The same applied for civil cases. Thus, EULEX tended not to treat civil cases involving domestic violence in later years either.

While remarkable progress has been made over the past twenty years in establishing a legislative framework and institutional mechanisms for protecting women, institutions must now enforce it. "Impunity" was the recurring theme among research participants. In numerous cases, law enforcement officers, judges, and prosecutors faltered when called to intervene in domestic violence cases.²⁵¹ While the prioritisation of domestic violence cases as human rights violations has improved the timely processing of cases, customary law, "blaming the victim", the backlog of cases, prejudicial judges, failure to ensure automatic prosecution of

criminal offences occurring within domestic relationships, nepotism, corruption, and low sentencing have all remained reasons for women's insufficient access to justice.²⁵² Moreover, government failures to allocate adequate resources for rehabilitation and reintegration programs for both victims and perpetrators mean that women have inadequate protection and poor support for recovery.

A BROADER SENSE OF SECURITY

"In Kosovo, customary law continues to function above the law; a girl and a boy are not born equal."

- Donika Kadaj, MP, 2011

The remote village of Brod is nestled in a valley surrounded by towering mountains that border Albania and North Macedonia.²⁵³ The women of the village and UN agency representatives visiting from Pristina squeezed into a classroom at the local primary school. They chatted about pressing issues: the future of the village, unemployment, domestic violence, access to education...

"In terms of education, the women in the room told us that not a single woman in Brod had spent even one day in secondary school," Luciano Calestini, then Deputy Head of UNICEF, was shocked to learn. "Equally concerning is the issue of domestic violence," he said. When UN staff asked about this largely taboo topic, the women responded, "This is not a problem here!" But as the conversation progressed, a woman clarified, "It's not a problem here: men don't hit us, unless we say, 'No.'" Violence appeared to be such a normal response to women's independence that it was not recognised as an issue.

After the meeting, the UN team paused for a coffee at a small café in another village. Two teenage boys stared at the large group of English-speaking visitors, a rare sight. They were invited to join the group. One boy was 17 and getting married the following week to a 16-year-old girl.²⁵⁴ "It is likely by next year this young couple will already have a baby," Calestini said. "That infant will be raised by this couple and their family,

inevitably with the same attitudes and practices of past generations that prevented this boy's young bride from going to school. You can see the cycle of exclusion set to continue in the life of an infant not even born yet."

"So, 1325 is very far from places like Dragash," he concluded. "It's three hours down the road from Pristina, but it's a hundred years away."

The visit was part of a UNDP-supported project that sought to integrate the Municipality of Dragash as an extension of the Sharr National Park, a magnificent mountain area where people still live in isolation and poverty. UNDP Resident Representative Lubrani said that it took a "special proactive effort to reach out to the women and ensure that their views and perspectives were included."²⁵⁵

A lot has changed in rural Dragash in the last decade, supported by UN agencies, international development agencies like the Austrian Development Agency, local officials, and women's rights groups. The local Women's Initiative Association has worked with the Mayor and Gender Equality Officer to engage more women in decision-making processes including related to the municipal budget; enabled access to education and employment through improved public transport; and addressed domestic violence by establishing better functioning municipal coordination mechanisms. Local actors also worked with local businesses, securing employment for many women in the area, towards their economic autonomy.

While legislation protecting women's security and human rights is generally in line with international standards in Kosovo,²⁵⁶ women may not always feel protected and secure. Particularly in geographic areas on the margins, and among marginalised groups, such as ethnic minorities and persons with disabilities, women face multiple insecurities.

In 2020, young women elaborated several areas in which they felt insecure.²⁵⁷ They defined security broadly, in line with definitions of human security,²⁵⁸ considering their overall wellbeing. Sexual harassment remained rampant, with insufficient streetlights, poor transport, and a weak police

response. “We don’t even have streetlights. It’s pitch-black both when we go to school and when we return home from school,” a young woman said.²⁵⁹ They lacked freedom of movement, including access to opportunities to learn abroad because of continuing visa restrictions. They were concerned for their health amid the emigration of healthcare workers. “The high unemployment rate and the fact that people are leaving Kosovo makes me wonder whether we will have doctors 30 years from now. This makes me feel insecure,” a young Roma woman from Prizren said.²⁶⁰

Ethnic minority women face many of the same issues as Kosovar Albanian women, but their situation has been exacerbated by their double marginality. Serb women have felt insecure, as well as isolated without proper public transportation linking Serb majority municipalities to other parts of Kosovo, an issue that persisted in 2020.²⁶¹

Ethnic Gorani women living in rural areas surrounding Brod are vulnerable due to a lack of access to education and early marriage. Roma, Egyptian, and Ashkali women face similar challenges. Agushi from RROGRAEK said:

Roma women are represented too little and in a very discriminatory way. Kosovo Serbs are always mentioned as the primary minority. Our communities are only brought up when donors require it from institutions. Otherwise, we are not considered. Internationals should see us as equal, but among the minorities, they forget we exist.²⁶²

For years, UNMIK seemingly forgot that hundreds of Roma lived in settlements contaminated with lead, on the margins of northern Kosovo, an area plagued by interethnic conflict, lawlessness, and neglect. “An UNMIK report commissioned in 2000 recommended relocation of the camps because of it, but it was never acted upon,” the BBC reported in 2005.²⁶³ In 2007, a UNDP representative elaborated the “long story”:

The settlement had tailings in serious heavy metal contaminants, especially lead, which had a degenerative impact particularly on children. And UNMIK didn't do much about it; they didn't see it as problematic and obviously seriously underestimated the problem. ... I think that UNMIK later realised the challenge, perhaps a few years too late.²⁶⁴

The dire environmental situation in these settlements impacted women in particular. The Society for Threatened People reported, "Most women who get pregnant in the camps these days miscarry. No matter if it is their first child or their tenth child, it is most likely they will miscarry."²⁶⁵ Women feared their children would become sick and die. They observed children "getting angry and violent over little things. They lose their hearing [and] get disorientated when they walk. As they get worse they lose their memory and vomit every day." Though it is a great honour for women to become pregnant, women self-aborted, fearing for the wellbeing of future children.²⁶⁶ Only in 2010 did international actors start closing the camps and supporting the relocation of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptians who had been living in deplorable conditions for a decade.²⁶⁷

Overall, while some programs have sought to target the specific needs of women and girls in post-conflict Kosovo, many remain vulnerable and marginalised.²⁶⁸ Their security "is not good enough in all fields of life," Agushi said.²⁶⁹

Securing education

"Nowadays there is no discussion as to whether young girls should continue on to higher education. Now the discussion is how to find ways to help them financially and support them through university."

- Marta Prenkpalaj, school director, Has, 2007, cited in KGSC, *History is Herstory, too*

Each night, before she fell asleep, fantasies filled her head. These were not the normal fantasies of a fifteen-year-old girl. She wasn't dreaming about what new outfit she could wear or cute boys at the café. Instead, she fantasised about finishing high school and starting her own business. This was unlikely, as her family had decided not to send her to secondary school. She loved school and begged them not to end her education, but it was the only option they had. They couldn't afford to educate her and her two brothers at the same time; the travel and school supplies cost too much. A girl could never support them in their old age; she would marry and join some other family. So here she was, at home, dreaming of school. As for starting her own business, when she told her mother, her mother roared with laughter. "Why did I give birth to a daughter who lives inside her dreams," she said. "Why couldn't she just find a nice boy to marry?"

In 2004, roughly 65 percent of Kosovo women compared to 41 percent of men had not completed secondary education. On average, women had only 8.45 years of schooling compared to 10.35 years for men.²⁷⁰ The fact that girls discontinued their schooling before boys was attributable in part to culture-based social norms. While no difference existed between girls' and boys' schooling in the cities in 2011,

in rural areas, structural conditions such as poor family economies and a lack of school buildings, kept such traditions alive. Without a safety net, older people still rely on younger members of their families for survival, and, culturally, boys often take on this task. They have better job prospects and the historical social responsibility to ensure financial security for elderly parents later in life. Therefore, historically, boys have been sent to school instead of girls when financial choices had to be made.²⁷¹

Often, girls in rural areas must walk a few miles alone, along busy state roads to reach their school, an itinerary parents have preferred their daughters not undertake. "You cannot walk freely in the streets without being catcalled," a young woman told KWN in 2020.²⁷² She, like other young women and their parents, feared that they would face a cacophony of catcalls from cars and men passing by on their way to and from school; this made them feel insecure.²⁷³

Girls from some ethnic groups have had even worse access to education, such as Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and Gorani girls. Social norms such as early marriage and economic woes prevented them from attending higher education.²⁷⁴ "I was afraid to tell my father about [the catcalling] as he would never let me go out again. And this happened during the day."²⁷⁵ Still in 2020, young Roma women said that such situations can contribute to early marriage in an effort to "protect" young women, which ironically can prevent young women from accessing higher levels of education. Indeed, Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian girls were underrepresented in upper secondary education where they made up less than 42 percent of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian children attendees.²⁷⁶

Whether women and girls have access to public services, including education, can indicate "the extent to which women's and girls' specific needs are addressed in the design, financing, and delivery of basic services," according to the UN Secretary-General.²⁷⁷ Women's unequal access to education due to broader social conditions can put them at a disadvantage when they seek to enter the labour force later in

life. Without economic security, women struggle to protect themselves from violent family situations, and, more generally, to be independent.

Thankfully, in Kosovo the situation has begun to change at least with regard to accessing education. Women's rights activists' tireless advocacy has kept rural schools opened and contributed to opening new secondary schools in rural areas, enabling young women's easier access to education. Now, as a result, girls (49 percent) and boys (51 percent) complete upper secondary education almost equally.²⁷⁸ As of 2020, even more girls than boys attended public universities, comprising 60 percent of bachelor program attendees, 64 percent of master's students, and 68 percent of PhD enrollees.

In conclusion, while some minority groups and rural women still face some challenges, generally, as women's rights activist and one of the first woman school directors from the rural region of Has, Marta Prenkpalaj said in 2007, "Nowadays there is no discussion as to whether young girls should continue on to higher education. Now the discussion is how to find ways to help them financially and support them through university."²⁷⁹

A “black hole” for health

"What makes it more difficult in rural areas, and for women in particular, is that rural residency is intertwined with women's level of education and their socioeconomic status. Most of them do not generate income and are not self-sufficient."

- Dr. Skender Syla, Head of Office,
World Health Organisation, 2011

Prior to the conflict, the Yugoslav state owned all health facilities. During the nineties, the discriminatory policies of the Government of Serbia meant that Kosovo Albanians lacked access to state healthcare services. Following the ousting of Albanian doctors from public health clinics, Albanians tended not to trust Serb doctors.²⁸⁰ Kosovo Albanians self-funded their own limited health services as part of the non-governmental Mother Teresa Society for nearly a decade through a voluntary tax.²⁸¹

Then the 1999 war in Kosovo marked a further setback to accessing healthcare. Serbian troops' violence against women and girls caused severe long-term health damage.²⁸² Serbian blockades left women in areas like Drenica isolated from access to medical care and sanitary supplies.²⁸³ For example, a woman recalled that she “gave birth to twins in the mountains” after being forced from her home by the Serbian military.²⁸⁴ Other women miscarried or went into labour early due to trauma. Women's stories and independent documentation by foreign researchers indicate that women's and girls' reproductive health needs were unmet during the war.²⁸⁵

After the war, the health sector generally has remained poorly developed.²⁸⁶ Public health insurance has not existed.

The 2004 Kosovo Health Law allows special groups limited access to certain types of public health services free of charge.²⁸⁷ Provisions in this Law directed towards women relate only to maternity, neglecting other relevant services such as gynaecological care, therapy, and routine examinations. "Kosovo is a black hole in Europe if we speak about reproductive healthcare," said Visare Gorani Gashi, former acting head of AGE.²⁸⁸

Resolution 1325 calls for "women's and girls' specific reproductive health needs [to be] met in conflict and post-conflict situations," according to the UN Secretary-General. Kosovo must install policies that improve access to quality reproductive healthcare for citizens. The UN Secretary-General proposes that maternal mortality rates serve as a proxy indicator reflective of the "quality of public services reaching women and girls."²⁸⁹

Kosovo's public institutions had not heard this advice as of 2011. They did not even know the nature and extent of healthcare problems because record-keeping was so poor. Weak data management systems meant that in 2009 only one maternal death was recorded per 100,000 births (and none in 2008 and 2007),²⁹⁰ particularly unbelievable statistics considering that in countries such as Germany, where healthcare is significantly better, the maternal mortality rate is eight per 100,000 births.²⁹¹ In 2012, the maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births was 10.5, and data seemed unclear in the years that followed.²⁹² A government strategy stated that the maternal mortality ratio was 3.7 during the period of 2011-2015, but later said there were no reported cases from 2013 to 2016.²⁹³ Thus, data on maternal mortality remain quite confusing. According to *Prishtina Insight*, health institutions do not always record maternal mortality accurately because, as Merita Vuthaj, Head of the Division of Maternal and Child Health at the Ministry of Health told them:

Let us take an example: if during complications [following birth] a woman remains in a coma, and is

perhaps transferred to the neurology department, she stays there for two to three months – and after that, she dies. Her death will not be registered as a maternal death, but rather death by blood loss.²⁹⁴

Still in 2020, women’s rights activists expressed concern that Kosovo lacks accurate record-keeping related to maternal mortality.²⁹⁵ “We have a very crippled health system,” said activist Demolli. “Disease is not registered, and there is no digitalised system. Thus, we do not know the causes of death of pregnant women.”

Between 2005 and 2010, Kosovo authorities registered 335 infant deaths, that is infants who died between 24 hours and 11 months after their birth.²⁹⁶ This suggests an average of 67 infant deaths per year. No data was available disaggregated by sex or age. The year 2012 seems to have been an outlier, with 316 infant deaths registered.²⁹⁷ Meanwhile, in 2020, authorities registered 65 infant deaths; 44.6 percent were female and 55.4 percent were male.²⁹⁸ This suggests that little has changed over time, and concerns over the accuracy of this data have persisted.

“A significant challenge is the lack of accountability mechanisms in the health sector, such as the lack of maternal and child death audit,” said Doina Bologna back in 2011, when she headed UNFPA. She believed significant underreporting existed in Kosovo.²⁹⁹ Dr. Sylva agreed: “For example, we have no proper record of cancer in Kosovo where we would know how many women are suffering from breast cancer or cervical cancer. We do not have an adequately functioning information system,” he said.³⁰⁰ This has impacted policy and response to illnesses.

In 2020, Magbule Elezi from the Association of Midwives of Kosovo attributed continuing issues with maternal and infant mortality to closures of maternities in some municipalities. The Government closed maternity wards under the pretence that general family doctors could provide these gynaecological services:

We have raised our concern about the lack of maternity hospitals. In cities, there are Family Medicine Centres and hospitals, but other [rural] municipalities lack gynaecological services. We have been in contact with KWN all the time, and we have pushed forward the issue that closing maternity hospitals presents. I do not agree that family doctors should perform gynaecological examinations of women. Family doctors examine patients but are limited to the extent to which they can perform this examination. Maternity hospitals in Kosovo should not have been closed, but rather opened in every municipality, so that women could receive services wherever they are. But since some have been closed in Kosovo, women are obliged to go either to private hospitals or hospitals [in far away cities].³⁰¹

Elezi highlighted the vital role that midwives can play, as well, particularly in rural areas:

In some municipalities, midwives ... have helped women give birth during the war or now, without a gynaecologist. For example, we have the Municipality of Suhareka, where midwives work 24-hours. They wait for women. They help them during birth, and only in cases of complications do women go to Pristina. Not so many births are registered in other municipalities because all of them are concentrated in Pristina [due to services available there]. The example of Suhareka has to be followed by other municipalities. Only in case of complications should they call a gynaecologist. Women would more likely go to the maternity hospital [in their municipality] than to the hospital in another city.³⁰²

Evidence suggests that women do not have access to quality healthcare, much like the rest of the population.³⁰³ Kosovo's poor and rural inhabitants faced added challenges in accessing healthcare.³⁰⁴ First and foremost, Kosovo has inadequate public hospitals and equipment. "We still don't have health services that are wide-ranging and specific," Dr. Sylja said. Budget allocations to public healthcare and hospitals have been low. The public health system reportedly accounted for a meagre 9.2 percent of the Kosovo Budget or 35 euros per capita per year in 2009.³⁰⁵ Without health insurance, people must foot the bill for healthcare costs, including purchasing their own medication, an issue that remained in 2020 as still no health insurance law had passed. With low employment rates, healthcare bills have continued to be beyond many people's financial means.³⁰⁶

The system's inability to offer healthcare closer to rural women means that they lack access to particular types of healthcare. For example, "the test on breast cancer or cervical cancer is specific and cannot be offered everywhere women live," Dr. Sylja said. Although "emergency rooms and hospitals are everywhere around Kosovo, even in the most remote areas," he said, a gap exists between urban and rural areas regarding access to healthcare. Poor living conditions and long distances between rural homes and healthcare centres limit rural citizens' access. A lack of financial independence continues to prevent women living in rural areas from travelling to clinics or paying a doctor.³⁰⁷ "Since most of them do not generate income, they are not independent women," Dr. Sylja said. They depend on the mercy of their families to access healthcare. As activist Demolli said, "If there would be a gynaecologist in Opoja or Dragash [rural areas], women would go for a check-up. Instead, they need to go with their mother-in-law in Prizren."³⁰⁸ Culturally, particularly for rural women, having a family member "escort" them to the doctor was under the pretence of ensuring their security. Nevertheless, given the still quite private nature of gynaecological and reproductive

health, women might hesitate to go to a doctor, wanting to maintain confidentiality from other family members.

Moreover, some women expressed their concerns about visiting male doctors; they preferred that only women healthcare workers examine them. These issues could prevent women from accessing needed healthcare services, given the rarity of women doctors, especially in rural areas. Without receiving adequate reproductive healthcare, especially preventative healthcare, women's risks of complications may increase, an issue not only affecting pregnant women but all women.

While Serb women tended to have better access to healthcare than women of other ethnicities, statistically speaking,³⁰⁹ they still faced several challenges related to their reproductive health. Activist Simić, who worked in rural areas surrounding Mitrovica, observed:

Women in rural areas who are 50 to 60 years old have never had a pap smear. They are lacking the basics. They only went to the [obstetrician or gynaecologist] when they were having children. They were not educated on the importance [of regular check-ups] and lack access. When it comes to the urban population, there is no sexual education in schools, so its taboo. They have access to information on the internet and engage in sexual activities but have no guidance. They don't have contraception ... its left to them to navigate. There is regulated access to abortion, but girls are not likely to seek those services here because of stigma. They will go to clinics across the border. The situation has not changed in the past ten years. Free condoms are everywhere, but not free birth control [so] the onus of sex and having children is put on these young girls. There is very little support available.³¹⁰

Some of these issues continued or even intensified for women of all ethnicities during the COVID-19 pandemic. In

2020, women encountered difficulties accessing healthcare for themselves and their children due to financial hardship brought on by unemployment, periodic discontinuation of public transport, and restrictions on movement.³¹¹

Some minority women face added challenges in accessing healthcare, particularly Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, Bosnian, Turkish, and Gorani women.³¹² Agushi said that Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian women face discrimination because of their skin colour, clothes, and language. "Nothing has changed," she said.³¹³ Activist Rahmani said that women with different abilities also face added challenges in accessing healthcare:

Women should have regular gynaecological check-ups, not only when they are pregnant. But we cannot go to the gynaecologist alone. I receive many complaints from women with disabilities as they cannot do a check-up in a normal gynaecological chair; the chair or table must be hydraulic. One woman went for a check-up in Prizren, where there was a normal table. She wasn't even assisted by the doctor and nurses. Moreover, they were so rude to her, saying, "Sit there, if you can." Of course she couldn't, so she couldn't have the check-up either! I, too, had the same case, but with the elevator. The Gynaecology Unit was on the third floor, and the elevator wasn't working. Even if it was functional, I wouldn't be able to sit in the chair by myself.³¹⁴

Such accessibility issues prevent women with disabilities from accessing healthcare, especially women from rural areas, she said. "They have to go to the gynaecologist with a companion, to help them undress. Nothing has been done to improve their access to healthcare," she said.

Kosovars also still lack understanding about the importance of routine medical check-ups and that regular visits to the doctor could prevent many diseases.³¹⁵ "We have a

certain way of thinking," Dr. Sylva said. "We only start thinking about our health when we get sick."

A fundamental ignorance of preventive medicine contributes to the neglect of women's reproductive health needs, which are narrowly understood as related merely to sex. Single, divorced, or widowed women in particular face social stigmas associated with visiting the gynaecologist. "After the death of my husband I needed to go to the gynaecologist, but it was difficult for me because gossip from people and their guesses that I could be pregnant, kept me from doing that."³¹⁶ Another young woman told KWN, "I was young and when I told them that I had pain, my mother-in-law said to me, 'The same thing happened to me but it will pass and don't tell about this because it is shameful.'" Families tell women to "deal" with the pain rather than seek medical attention. "He was not interested in my health," another woman said, referring to her husband. "Sometimes he didn't believe me that I was sick. He said to me that we can't go to the doctor for every pain."

Norms rooted in the particular history of Kosovo Albanians also have prevented women's access to health, especially reproductive health. For a people whose struggle for survival and resistance to oppressors is the dominant national narrative, for some members of the population, women represent the makers of future warriors. Activist Shehu recalled an illustrative interaction with her neighbour, a doctor:

We were trying to distribute condoms and contraceptives, and my doctor was blaming me for this. He said, "Why are you distributing these things to women? Don't you know that we as an Albanian community need soldiers?"

I told him, "I have a son, but I still hope there are no more wars. Don't you think women have pro-choice rights? We want to have children and plan the family the way we want. We always tell women to protect their health. We aren't telling them to have one or two or no children." I have more children than my

doctor anyway, so I told him, "You are the last one to talk about this patriotic right."³¹⁷

Elvanda Gojani similarly recalled stories that she heard during trainings for medical professionals organized by the Action for Mothers and Children; when nurses were distributing contraceptives in rural areas immediately after the war: "An older nurse who was close to being retired refused to distribute them. 'You are trying to decrease natality in Kosovo,' she said."³¹⁸ Among some government officials and healthcare practitioners, the view that Kosovo Albanians needed to increase the natality rate for nationalistic reasons remained present in 2020, potentially hindering women's reproductive rights, but also their labour rights and equal access to employment.³¹⁹

Doctors' and family members' "traditional mentality" was a recurring theme in interviews. "Medical service is not just a physical approach. It is also the aspect of communication between a woman and medical personnel," Dr. Sylva said. "Health personnel often treat women as objects rather than subjects." Women also complained about doctors' confidentiality practices, a trend that continued over time.³²⁰

Similar to physical health, the psychological wellbeing of women and men has remained largely unaddressed. In a place devastated by recent conflict, "there has been no coherent involvement in helping victims," Bologa said.³²¹ The very thought of seeking psychological assistance remains broadly unaccepted, Sebahate Pacolli from KRCT said:

Immediately after the war, reporting to others that one was going to the psychologist or psychiatrist was taboo. People would think that only crazy or psychotic people would go to the psychiatrist. So, we have to work on issues of awareness-raising.³²²

"The hardest thing is when you need a psychiatrist or a gynaecologist," a woman said. "The hardest part is to visit them

without other people finding out. For the rest of the doctors it is easier, but it's the psychiatrist and gynaecologist that we need the most."³²³ Muharrem Xhemajli from the Organisation for Veterans of the Kosovo Liberation Army said that "it would have been beneficial if state institutions and the state of Kosovo created special rehabilitation programs for members of the Kosovo Liberation Army and especially for women":

Straight after the war we didn't feel these psychological consequences because we had other problems like securing our homes, but now people have time to stop and think. Everyone has started to feel the psychological problems now. It's impossible to go through a war without any psychological damage. We may think we are okay, but it's impossible. We never did anything to deal with the trauma that was experienced. Sixteen veterans committed suicide. No one knew the cause, but we're sure it's because of the trauma they experienced during the war. There is no one out there dealing with these issues.³²⁴

Providing psychological counselling to women and men, ex-combatants and civilians, is important, Rogova said. She provided an example in which she was involved, in an isolated, mountainous area after the war:

Motrat Qiriazhi [Association] worked with men in Has region. We invited men from abroad who had experienced violence themselves, and they came to speak with men in Has. What a difference, if you compare the Has region in terms of [people's ability to cope with the] violence to other regions. We assisted men there, but in other regions, nobody, *nobody* did anything.

Organisations like the Centre for Protection of Women and Children, Motrat Qiriazhi, KRCT, One to One, medica Kosova,

and medica Gjakova have provided *ad hoc* assistance after the war. However, the lack of institutionalised psychological counselling for post-traumatic stress disorder may contribute to depression and domestic violence, research participants said. While mental health centres provided more services in 2020 than in prior years, stigma and economic hardship still prevented many people from using these services.

Despite the numerous shortcomings in women's access to healthcare, some research participants saw improvements over the last twenty years. "In 1999 you couldn't talk about family planning,"³²⁵ said Visare Mujko-Nimani of UNFPA. "People thought this meant you were trying to decrease the number of Albanians, especially in rural areas. Now this has changed a lot. Now men even buy condoms." There is now a better legislative framework.³²⁶ UNFPA, UNICEF, the World Health Organisation (WHO), and local NGOs have collaborated to support healthcare policy design, train service providers, undertake public outreach towards raising awareness on various health issues, and offer free contraceptives through the health system. "The WHO has evaluated Kosovo's maternity wards, developed program plans on staff training in all levels, installed a family doctor system, and helped consolidate the Ministry of Health," said Dr. Sylva.

In December 2010, the Oncology Institute finally opened, following years of advocacy efforts on behalf of women's rights activists; it provides free of charge exams towards identifying cancer early on. Breast cancer screening also has become more available in rural areas, following advocacy by women parliamentarians and women's rights activists, and annual campaigns have increased awareness regarding the importance of regular exams.

In summary, while some healthcare services have become more available to women in the last decade, and awareness seems to have increased about the importance of preventative healthcare, many women still lack access to quality healthcare, particularly those in rural areas and with disabilities.

Safeguarding women's livelihoods

"In our tradition women don't get family heritage and divorce processes are very long. There are a lot of obstacles in property division and family heritage. Sometimes I think it's too bad that we keep telling women, 'You have a lot of opportunities in your life,' because these mechanisms are not functioning well. No one thinks to create or offer long term strategies to ensure women prosperity and other opportunities."

- Violeta (Krasniqi) Rexha, Ombudsperson
Institution, 2007

"Today I had a case of a woman who is really strong,"
Qosaj Mustafa said while working at the OSCE in 2007:

She is fighting with her father-in-law who is threatening her, and I said to her, "Are you going to claim your property rights?"

And she said, "Yes."

"Are you positive?" I asked, because I don't know what to tell her anymore. I don't know if I'm putting a bullet in her head if I tell her that she should claim her property rights because her father-in-law might kill her. You see a woman might get killed because she seeks to have the property divided and in her name. She seeks to be acknowledged and justice to be served. Then, you are not that proud that you encouraged her to seek justice because you know that violent male behaviour is excused by the society. The courts and justice system are far away from being

aware of women's rights and sensitive towards women's rights.³²⁷

In theory, women should have equal rights to employment and family assets. In practice, this does not happen. A complex social system of norms, structural conditions, and poorly implemented laws make Kosovo women vulnerable to poverty and disempowerment. More often than not, property belongs to men, and cannot be transferred to or inherited by women. Women thus do not have the collateral to apply for loans.

Lack of access to the labour market make unemployment rates higher among women: 59.6 percent, compared to 42.7 percent among men as of 2009.³²⁸ By 2020, unemployment had decreased, but gender inequalities persisted (33.1 percent among women compared to 21.5 percent among men); moreover, women's inactivity rates remained significantly higher than men's, with only approximately two in ten women employed.³²⁹ Several of the same structural inequalities persisted.

Let's take property. Several laws establish women's equal right to property, but issues exist with implementation, said Valbona Salihu, an activist and lawyer:

The law states that the common wealth of spouses should be registered under both their names. If one of them does not do this, the fines are high. But it doesn't state which institution is going to implement this, or through which mechanism one complains. This is a gap in the law.³³⁰

The Kosovo Law on Inheritance follows international standards in that a deceased's property should be divided equally among heirs.³³¹ The Law specifies equality in terms of "brothers and sisters" and for the most part has a gender sensitive approach.³³² Inequality emerges during the process of making a claim as heir. Inheritance proceedings must be

filed for by the heir(s). While the Law entitles women heirs to file just as men, cultural norms suggest that a woman heir filing “takes away” from her brothers and other male relatives.³³³

Vuniqi has researched the issue:

We asked women, why would they resign from their families’ inheritance? We came to the conclusion that many resign due to social pressure that emerges from our unwritten laws or, let’s say, our cultural habits. They would say, “This is how it is supposed to be. I do not need my family’s inheritance. I left it to my brother.”

As a KWN researcher observed in the mountainous region of Decan, while discussing young women’s notion of “security” in 2020:

Around twenty girls gathered in the auditorium of the Gymnasium. It was very difficult to encourage them to speak. They were very shy, but also unaccustomed to being asked about peace or security. Eventually, a girl whispered quietly that the right to property would assure her security. Suddenly the auditorium buzzed with the other girls opposing her. The Head of the Student Council took the floor. “I would never, ever, take the property and inheritance of my brothers. That belongs to them and not me!” She spoke with pride and self-confidence, as the other girls nodded in agreement.

Indeed, men still comprise the majority of those who have invoked their right to inheritance.³³⁴ In 2016, only 18 percent of immovable properties were owned by women.³³⁵ Although courts should require women’s presence during proceedings, women continue to be pressured against filing claims. Even among the property-related cases monitored by EULEX, not a

single one dealt with women's right to property, despite EULEX's talk around this issue.³³⁶

In 2020, Osmani explained that patriarchal social norms still hindered implementation of the legal framework:

In Kosovo, the equal rights of women in general, as well as to inheritance, are guaranteed by the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, the Law on Non-Contested Procedure, the Law on Contested Procedure, and the Law on Inheritance. Although we have a proper legal framework, historical traditions and customs continue to influence the division of inheritance between heirs in Kosovo. The law still allows space, by enabling parties to agree and by enabling the renunciation of inheritance. This results in the division of inheritance mainly for male heirs, in accordance with the dominant patriarchal mentality in our society. This is confirmed by the fact that approximately only 16 percent of properties registered in Kosovo are owned by women. Women's minimal receipt of inheritance also results from their ignorance of the law, and this is the point on which we must work as institutions, along with civil society organisations, the media, and other relevant actors.³³⁷

Indeed, there have been a flurry of efforts in this direction with institutions, women's rights organisations, and international actors organising media, social media, and door-to-door campaigns, as well as forum theatre and free legal aid to increase awareness regarding women's rights to property and inheritance and to help women claim these rights. AGE, supported by women's rights groups' advocacy, also has put in place and renewed an Administrative Instruction on the Joint Registration of Property that has encouraged spouses to jointly register their property by waiving affiliated government taxes and fees. Several actors have worked with notaries and courts, as well. Despite these many efforts, statistics and stories from

places like Decan illustrate that equal property and inheritance rights for women remain a distant dream.

Women who lost family members during the war, or whose family members are still missing, have faced additional problems in claiming their right to property. Shehu, whose organisation medica Kosova supports women with missing husbands in claiming ownership of their property, said, "There were certain procedures that they had to follow before becoming eligible for these rights. They had to claim their husbands were dead." The procedure of declaring one's husband dead is not only psychologically painful, but also often frowned upon by in-laws. Without property and often without employment, women rely on these family members to survive. Defying their wishes could break women off from the little livelihood security that they have.

Women's disadvantaged economic position can contribute to economic violence, where an abuser uses monetary means to control a family member.³³⁸ Unemployed inhabitants of rural areas with less than a secondary school education have tended to be more likely to experience economic violence.³³⁹ With no one to turn to, they are the most in need of livelihood support services, defined by the UN Secretary-General as temporary employment of women "in the context of early economic recovery programmes."³⁴⁰ Support from UN agencies is meant to protect at risk women and girls. When asked what proportion of their budgets had been allocated to gender equality issues, civil society organisations, or from Multi-Donor Trust Funds to gender equality issues, as per the UN Secretary-General's indicators, UN agencies in Kosovo did not have precise information available.

While precise expenditures cannot be tracked, as discussed later, a myriad of economic recovery programs with some attention to women have existed in Kosovo, supported by UN agencies, the EU, EU member states, and the U.S. Government, among others. In recent years, the Government of Kosovo has slowly started earmarking some funds for addressing women's economic needs, as well. Women's

organisations working in rural areas have witnessed an increase in state subsidies for women in agriculture and trade.³⁴¹ While women still receive fewer state subsidies than men, partially because they own fewer businesses, slight progress can be observed.

The UN Secretary-General suggests monitoring recovery and peace-building funding allocations to assess the “relative priority given to women’s empowerment and gender equality”. He puts forth an array of quantitative measures to indicate the extent to which the “needs of women and girls, especially vulnerable groups (internally displaced persons, victims of sexual and gender-based violence, ex-combatants, refugees, returnees) are addressed in relief, early recovery and economic recovery programmes.”³⁴²

Back in 2011, representatives of various UN agencies attributed the lack of data on these indicators to a number of factors. First, the UN Secretary-General’s indicators were new then, and agencies did not maintain gender-disaggregated data over the last decade. Second, they tended not to have programs or specific projects related to gender equality issues. Rather, they used “gender mainstreaming,” integrating gender into their programs. “The fact that we can’t say precisely how much we spend on gender programming is a positive sign because it means we have integrated it into all programming,” said Calestini at UNICEF in 2011.

Even with gender mainstreaming, collecting gender-disaggregated data is important for understanding how programs impact women and men differently. Tracking UN agency spending on women and girls in Kosovo also has been difficult because the UN Resident Representative was not mandated to track all UN agencies’ financial systems.³⁴³ “We have 21 UN agencies active in Kosovo with different mandates, [and] all with their own agency reporting mechanisms,” UNDP Gender Advisor Talbot said. Recordkeeping appeared to be improving in 2011, following the introduction of a gender marker system in 2010 at the UNDP. Talbot explained that gender markers cannot measure precisely the budget, but they

can indicate progress. The gender marker, mandatory for all UNDP projects, indicates the extent to which gender dimensions are integrated into all phases of a given project. The markers suggest that UNDP has improved its performance in integrating gender dimensions into its projects.³⁴⁴ UNDP Kosovo also monitors its annual budget to ensure that funds are allocated to gender equality results, Talbot said.

Between 1999 and 2019, UNDP Kosovo reported spending 8.2 million dollars on programs that had a strong focus on gender equality.³⁴⁵ As UNDP representatives explained in an interview in 2020, “the Bureau of Peacebuilding and Recovery (BCPR) under UNDP recommends or requires that all country offices allocate 15 percent of expenditure towards gender mainstreaming.” Actually, the UNDP’s strategic aim is:

to eventually achieve having 15 percent allocation of all country programme and project budgets to advancing gender equality and/or empowering women [where] gender equality and the empowerment of women is [a] principal objective.³⁴⁶

This suggests persisting misunderstandings regarding the difference between gender equality-targeted and gender-mainstreamed programming, and the importance of earmarking funding for the latter, as per UNDP’s own strategic aims.

Despite growing acknowledgement of the importance of and commitments to gender-responsive budgeting by the UN,³⁴⁷ among others, the practice of gender mainstreaming programs has continued to obscure actual expenditures on women, girls, and gender equality, given the dearth of adequate data management systems for tracking these expenditures. While UN agencies’ improved gender marker system enables tracking of funding for programs focused specifically on furthering gender equality, it does not trace precise expenditures in programs where gender has been mainstreamed, which comprise the bulk of such programming.

Thus, still in 2020, no accurate account of expenditures existed related to the UN Secretary-General's indicators.

Some UNDP programs have focused solely on gender equality issues. "The Women's Safety and Security Initiative is 100 percent gender based," said Nazlie Bala who managed the initiative.³⁴⁸ This program played an important role in supporting collaboration between institutions and women's organisations in researching domestic violence, drafting evidenced-based policies, creating curricula for police and judges on domestic violence, and filling in shelters' funding gaps. UN agencies had joint follow-on programs to address gender-based violence by continuing to further institutional capacities for addressing violence, including through the establishment of coordination mechanisms in targeted municipalities.

Programs like Food for Work do not seem to have been offered in Kosovo, and we struggled to identify programs that provided women with temporary employment as such.³⁴⁹ However, several projects have aimed to improve women's economic plight.³⁵⁰ For example, the EU-funded project Beautiful Kosovo allocated five million euros towards poverty reduction and combating unemployment among marginalised groups, including women, in 2010.³⁵¹ In the absence of a government to distribute aid, the World Bank-supported Community Development Fund (CDF), a local NGO, distributed funds to women's organisations and projects, but this comprised only five percent of CDF funds between 1999 and 2002.³⁵²

In the last decade, UNDP in cooperation with the Government of Kosovo has improved its targeting of women through its Active Labour Market Programs. As mentioned, several other internationally supported programs have sought to improve women's economic position.

Back in 2011, the EU had not had gender specific programs. This has changed. EU programs since then have sought to further women's engagement in politics, empower women in civil society, address gender-based violence, and

enhance women's human rights. Particularly since the adoption of the EU Gender Action Plan II in 2015, the EU has stepped up its efforts to ensure that all of its programs are gender-mainstreamed, towards meeting the EU's target that 85 percent of its programs contribute to gender equality. Through a myriad of education and economic programs, the EU has sought to ensure that women benefit and has taken some affirmative measures to address existing gender inequalities. Unfortunately, EU data tracking systems similarly do not enable examining precise expenditures for programs that involved gender mainstreaming.

Several other actors, particularly the U.S. and EU member states, also have stepped up their gender mainstreaming and gender-focused programming efforts, requesting or even requiring contractors to include objectives towards gender equality in their programs. Rogova observed:

Look at the example of other big donors in Kosovo like the Austrian Development Agency and Swedish International Development Agency. They are ... pushing others who are not women's rights organisations to implement gender in their programs. For me, that is a *huge* change, to see how now we have organisations who have never worked on gender that now have to include gender in their programs. For me, that is a huge change and huge difference.³⁵³

Moreover, funders like the Austrian Development Agency and EU have recognised the expertise that women's rights organisations possess, contracting them to support integrating a gender perspective and further gender-transformative approaches in their programs, as well as those of their contractors. This has had the added value of institutionalising the engagement of women's rights groups in development programming, as foreseen by Resolution 1325 and the EU Gender Action Plan II. Moreover, it has supported

the often under-funded women's rights groups financially, by compensating them for their expertise.

The EU, UN Women, Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, STAR Network of World Learning, and various foreign governments have supported women's organisations financially over the last two decades. Perhaps the largest single fund targeting women in immediate postwar Kosovo was the Kosovo Women's Initiative (KWI), a UNHCR-run, U.S.-funded project that sought to assist women affected by war.³⁵⁴ It was modelled after similar projects in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Rwanda, activist Ahmeti said:

\$10 million was given to women's organisations. There was the Rwanda Women's Initiative and now AWI in Afghanistan. Who spent that money? It was international organisations, not women's organisations. It went towards sewing courses, hairdressing, and computers, low wage pay, and no jobs. ... Because when you are economically independent, you are free.³⁵⁵

Women's rights activists felt the bulk of the money went to international organisations contracted by UNHCR to run the program rather than to Kosovar women. Ahmeti, among others, said international organisations tended to homogenise women in their aid, failing to attend to diverse women's needs or to recognise that Kosovo had educated, capable women leaders.

Activists also expressed concern that KWI's small grants for women's organisations, like many donor-funded projects in Kosovo, encouraged women to undertake tasks like sewing and hairdressing where there was minimal market for their products and too little profit to address their situations of poverty. Indeed, the external evaluation of KWI, as one of the largest "income generation" projects targeting women, found that "the proportion of profitable (or even breakeven) projects classed as KWI income generation projects drops below 30

percent.³⁵⁶ Later inquiries found few of these businesses still existed, though they had provided some income for a few women and their families in the immediate post-war context.³⁵⁷ KWI funding dwindled quickly from \$400,000 in 2001 to less than \$28,000 in 2004. "This decrease happened at the same time as a decrease in other sources of funding and was not counterbalanced by increased funds for NGOs from the budget of the Kosovo authorities," according to UNDP.³⁵⁸

The funding available immediately after the war decreased with time and became increasingly difficult for women's groups to secure. "There are less and less funds for women," said Macula of UN Women in 2011. Others, like Qosaj Mustafa, said protecting women's rights simply was not a priority for donors in 2011:

Civil society constantly is losing financial support. There are less and less funds for women. Funds for women's rights are at the bottom of priorities of donors' lists. If you talk to donors, they do not consider it an important task.³⁵⁹

Competition for funds and changing systems meant some women were "successful" in applying while others were not. When asked in 2011 whether women's ability to apply for funds has changed over time,³⁶⁰ Macula said:

Yes of course. Compared to the beginning, com'mon... The forms and the methodologies are changing. Now every government or donor requires results-based management. Before it was different. In our case we tried to build capacities of those who are weaker like Serb organisations and organisations from small cities, providing training on results-based management. Still, obtaining EU funds is very, very hard. People say it's like writing a dissertation. So, I don't think that donors are responding to the capacity of women, particularly smaller organisations.³⁶¹

More advanced women's organisations have adapted to the changing donor climate and are more successful in applying for funding, she said, but funding continues to decline quickly and is insufficient.

Tides started to turn in recent years, with women's rights organisations reporting an increase in funding, with the median annual income rising from 1,630 euros in 2010 to 5,000 euros in 2018.³⁶² An important development was KWN's establishment of the Kosovo Women's Fund in 2012, which explicitly sought to address the aforementioned shrinking funds available to women's rights groups and to empower groups that could not access larger funds. It has prioritised funding for the most vulnerable and marginalised, including groups working with youth, persons with different abilities, rural women, and survivors of violence. The Fund's unique approach has paired funding with tailored capacity development for organisations in fundraising, project proposal writing, organisational management, transparent financial management, and public relations, imparting new skills that have enabled organisations to secure funding from other sources, including the Government. Between 2012 and 2019, the Fund gave 197 grants to 107 women's rights organisations, amounting to more than one million euros.³⁶³ While several organisations still struggle to survive, opportunities exist for them to access funding and support.

CONCLUSIONS

"The new EULEX Head of Mission Xavier Bout de Marnhac promised that he would make sure that 1325 would be implemented. I am hoping that something will happen. Yes, EULEX is here to monitor Kosovo's Government, but we are here to monitor you, EULEX."

- Igballe Rogova, speech on the Anniversary of Resolution 1325, 31 October 2010

"To what extent do you think Resolution 1325 has been implemented in Kosovo over the last ten years?" This was the question we asked in 2011. The general consensus at that time was clear: few institutions that have the responsibility to implement Resolution 1325 have done so. "Not even internationals have implemented the Resolution, let alone people from Kosovo," activist Muharremi said.

While international organisations may not have always implemented the Resolution themselves, their presence and sometimes pressure has had a positive impact on Kosovo institutions. "The socio-political environment in Kosovo with its large international presence in combination with the Kosovar desire to prove to internationals that we are capable as a state have been great motivators regarding the implementation of 1325," said former police Director Selimi. Shqipe Krasniqi, former Acting Head of AGE, agreed that it was not internationals per se, but Kosovars' hopes for joining the EU and UN encouraged domestic institutions to take steps towards implementing the Resolution.

Kosovo's legal framework, generally aligned with international standards, has set a foundation for furthering

gender equality, towards implementing Resolution 1325. The Constitution includes CEDAW and now the Istanbul Convention. The Parliament adopted the Criminal Code, the Anti-discrimination Law, the Law on Protection from Domestic Violence, and the Law on Gender Equality, providing for equality at all decision-making levels. The Criminal Code has been amended to treat more forms of gender-based violence, including domestic violence as a separate criminal offence. Women who suffered violence during the war have been legally recognised and now receive benefits. Standard operating procedures have improved inter-institutional coordination in addressing domestic violence and sex trafficking. Affirmative measures have sought to increase women's property ownership, and some government bodies have taken a few, albeit insufficient, efforts to support women's economic empowerment.

Amid these accomplishments, still today, "Implementation represents a greater problem than establishing a law," as official Kajtazi said in 2011. Social norms, tradition, poor economic conditions, insufficient budgetary allocations, and weak institutions allow for continued systematic exceptions to the application of existing legislation, exemplified by women's still limited access to property, hesitancy to file for inheritance rights, struggle to claim child custody, insufficient protection from domestic violence, and inadequate access to justice for crimes committed. The persistence of violence in families, economic inequality between women and men, and continued underrepresentation of women in political decision-making at all levels are evidence that Resolution 1325 is far from fully implemented.

Ultimately, implementing Resolution 1325 requires a change in the mentality of people and institutions. "Difficulties arise from the mentality here, in which the man is always dominant and professions that have to do with physical force are seen as typical male professions," Selimi said. "This mentality also exists in the Western world, but they are too

afraid to show it openly.” While such attitudes had begun to shift a decade later, patriarchy remained an obstacle to women’s equal participation in politics, security forces, adequate address of gender-based violence, and women’s security, thus undermining implementation of Resolution 1325.

Although considerable progress has been made towards implementing Resolution 1325, more remains to be done, was the recurring theme heard in 2020. Gender Advisor Thais Santa Cruz’s summary was illustrative:

The 1325 Agenda has increasingly gained support from the international community, as well as by individual countries, and that has been reflected in its overall implementation. ... In my view, continued efforts are needed to achieve and ensure full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 around the world, and Kosovo is no exception. There have been many efforts from different sectors of society to advance its implementation, including, for example, numerous research and analyses shedding light on the challenges faced by women in the full realisation of their rights and in the implementation of the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda, as well as legislation put in place to address these issues. But then there is the issue of implementation. Because, despite all the studies reflecting the specific areas in which efforts are needed, and regardless of all legislation and policies in place to advance women’s rights, there is no real change unless there is commitment at the highest levels and political will to change things. While there has been progress in this area, there is still a long way to go.

“We have a proverb in Bulgaria ‘Five grandmothers and the child is sick’ meaning that we are many, but with no proper coordination and division of labour, some issues may be dropped,” said former gender focal point Krumova.

“Traditionally the grandmothers take care of the child, but if there are too many grandmothers it may be counterproductive. One might think, ‘Okay, the other four will take care of it.’” Several “grandmothers” in Kosovo, from UNMIK to EULEX to Kosovo institutions to KFOR... perhaps meant that in some instances nobody took responsibility for implementing Resolution 1325. Sometimes responsibilities were tossed to and from as “someone else’s mandate”, while in other cases inefficient overlap and competition existed over who “owns” particular activities. An activist reflected:

Coordination is always a challenge ... I’ve seen when it works well and when it doesn’t. There has been better cooperation among international organisations, the Government, and civil society. I see this as a trend, and it has changed for the better. Many people saw [implementing the Resolution] as a common project. A concrete example ... work around survivors’ rights really took a joint effort by everyone: local authorities, civil society, and international actors. Nothing would have happened without that broad support. Also, changing the criminal code and introducing domestic violence as a criminal offence was an example of a joint effort where everyone pulled their resources together and managed to change it. It’s shifting the power dynamics. ... You have to create a critical mass for change and that worked.

Such “triangles” of cooperation between international actors, civil society, and government institutions recurrently was mentioned as a key factor contributing to change. Building strong alliances could establish a “critical mass” capable of challenging even the most engrained, gender norms, and thereby contributing to the implementation of Resolution 1325. For example, UNICEF collaborated with women’s organisations and the Government to improve girls’ and women’s access to education. UNFPA worked with women’s organisations and

institutions to protect domestic violence victims, further reproductive health, and train healthcare professionals. UNIFEM (later UN Women), UNDP, and the UNMIK Police united with women's rights activists to support the police and security forces in institutionalising gender equality, police gender advisor Stroosnijder said: "I looked for close cooperation with the local women's network and UN Women in Kosovo. Without them nothing would have moved forward or been sustained!" More women in law enforcement and better training have made the police and Kosovo Security Force sensitive to the principles of Resolution 1325. UNDP, AGE, and KWN collaborated for crucial baseline research on domestic violence in 2008; based on this, they united with diverse institutions, civil society actors, and funders to draft laws and strategies to address violence and then consistently monitored their implementation over time. While still limited, women's property rights have increased thanks to cooperation between AGE, women's rights groups, and various international funders.

Closely related, progress often followed women's advocacy. "A lot of things don't get implemented, but a lot do, and the majority of them do simply because of civil society," said former gender advisor Hutchinson in 2007. "Not for one moment do I think that our office has made a change in society in Kosovo. I think that civil society has made a change." "KWN remains a very good example," said Krasniqi of AGE. "They took on the slogan of 1325, and it became a very strong slogan." Ten years later, Thais Santa Cruz agreed: "special credit goes to the advocacy and concrete actions of civil society and women's organisations, who have spearheaded all advances in several areas." As a representative of an international organisation observed:

Kosovo is an example of how women's rights organisations have capitalised on this policy document. You have a broad network of women's rights activists, and that was obvious. When you went to a village in the countryside, and people there speak about 1325, it

means there has been an enormous and widespread education and mobilisation. ... There are thousands of UN resolutions, but the reason why Resolution 1325 became well-known and useful is *because it was used* by activists. Kosovo is a very good example of that in that there was a critical mass of women's organisations using it and advocating change. Kosovo is a special case.

Indeed, women's rights activists used the Resolution in advocating for legal amendments, strategies towards gender equality, the establishment of the Agency for Gender Equality at the highest level, women's engagement in politics, and women's participation in negotiations on Kosovo's political status and with Serbia. When women were not included in the negotiations, the Women's Peace Coalition and the Regional Women's Lobby pushed for women's voices to be heard. Following their extensive advocacy, by 2011 Edita Tahiri led Kosovo's team in the Dialogue with Serbia, and Atifete Jahjaga was elected President of the Republic. Yet, even with such strong women leaders at the helm, coupled with women's rights organisations' advocacy, women's voices and needs have had extremely limited representation in peace negotiations.

"It's the human factor," said Macula of UN Women. "When you have the wrong person in the wrong place at the wrong time, it costs a lot." Leadership made the difference, we heard repeatedly. Early on, Lesley Abdela pushed for Kosovar women's participation in decisions made by UNMIK and the OSCE; Ambassador Chowdhury, Ambassador Žbogar, Papadopoulou, Lunacek, and von Cramon took the initiative to regularly meet women leaders; Behar Selimi, Atifete Jahjaga, Hysni Shala, and Tahire Haxholli advocated gender mainstreaming and improved systems within the police; and Besim M. Kajtazi, Head of the Department of Human Rights, carefully reviewed all legislation: "A gender perspective is not a priority in our society, but for me it was really interesting,"

he said, "and I felt obligated to compile these legal acts that have to do with gender equality."

Indeed, "Often men can be the most convincing champions for gender equality," Lubrani said, "especially with other men, helping to bring down barriers and explain that we're not talking about women being against men, but about the equal status of women for the betterment of the entire society, including men. We have evidence today that supporting gender equality accelerates any country's development agenda." Rogova agreed, "We women cannot push gender alone. That is why we work with men. This made the change in Kosovo." Men's and women's leadership can circumvent the major obstacles to implementation: a lack of coordination, hierarchic bureaucracy, and the fact that gender equality, so clearly stated in the Resolution and Kosovo's laws, has not been internalised fully yet.

Thais Santa Cruz added:

That being said, the biggest contribution has come from women themselves. Women have come together from and within different sectors of society to move forward an agenda that is very difficult to implement. Atifete Jahjaga was not only Kosovo's first female President, but she worked ceaselessly to visualise conflict-related sexual violence and support survivors; Edita Tahiri was Kosovo's main negotiator in the Brussels dialogue from 2014 to 2017 and was able to secure several agreements; Vafije Krasniqi Goodman addressed the Kosovo Assembly and spoke about her experience as a survivor of rape; Vjosa Osmani is the first female President in the Kosovo Assembly; and Luljeta Aliu sued the Kosovo Police for gender-based discrimination. The list is endless!!

Recognition of these and other unsung heroes who have contributed to implementing Resolution 1325 is important, and among the reasons that we have written these facts and fables.

Rogova expressed her concern that all too often women's stories and contributions have been forgotten:

The UN Secretary General had a special office for 1325, and we [activists] participated in his global study to see where we are now with 1325's implementation. Still, I had to push *hard* because they [the study's authors] were not recognising the work done, especially in this region, and I was there representing the whole Western Balkans. They were refusing to mention the work done here. They only mentioned UNIFEM. Only after we threatened to resign and secured support from other women leaders in the advisory group, like Madeleine Rees, did they include mention of local women's rights activists' work in the region.

Recognising the work of women's rights organisations and activists in contributing to the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Kosovo, and globally, is important. Where governments come and go, donor funds rise and fall, dedicated women's rights activists, organisations, and networks are among the few who weather the storm and keep pushing for the Resolution's implementation. They "breathe life" into what is otherwise just a piece of "toothless paper". Recognising and documenting their contributions, telling their stories, our stories, not only empowers activists to continue, but also allows for knowledge sharing across borders on strategies for better implementing the Resolution, towards better protecting and promoting women's rights in conflict and post-conflict societies.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1. Progress on the UN Secretary-General's Proposed Indicators

KWN used the UN Secretary-General's proposed indicators to assess the extent to which Resolution 1325 has been implemented in Kosovo. This annex summarizes our findings. The first and second columns correspond with the UN Secretary-General's proposed indicators. For the other columns, KWN established its own scoring system. The "Overall Score" is the overall extent to which Resolution 1325 has been implemented in Kosovo, where:

- 0 = not implemented
- 1 = partially implemented
- 2 = fully implemented
- DK = do not know or insufficient information
- NA = no longer applicable (e.g., the indicator was only relevant to the immediate post-conflict period)

The third column provides these scores for 2011 and the fourth column as of 2020. The fifth column indicates whether there has been progress (+), no change (=), or regress (-) in the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Kosovo, overall, since 2000 and in the last decade, since 2011, noted as relevant.

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
PREVENTION						
I. Prevention of all forms of violence against women, particularly sexual and gender-based violence						
1a	Prevalence of sexual violence	1	1	+ since 2000 = since 2011	Sexual violence was used extensively for military/ political ends, including recurrent attacks against the same victims. The situation improved after the war.	While wartime sexual violence has not existed, sexual violence continues, but prevalence is difficult to estimate given hesitancy to speak about such violence.
1b	Patterns of sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations	1	1	+ since 2000 = since 2011	There have been positive developments in the police and judiciary, including new policies and training. However, they are not fully implemented, and impunity persists, particularly for internationals who possess diplomatic immunity.	See above. Less evidence of sexual violence by international actors, but limited information available.
II. Operational gender-responsive systems in place to monitor, report and respond on violations of women's and girls' rights during conflict, ceasefires, peace negotiations and after conflict						

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
2	Extent to which UN peacekeeping and special political missions include information on violations of women's and girls' human rights in their periodic reporting to the Security Council	1	2	+	Roughly 54% of UNMIK's periodic reports to the UN Secretary-General included information about violations of women's and girls' rights. Half were silent on the issue. None of the UNMIK reports involved a gender mainstreaming approach.	97% of reports included gender-related issues, though a gender perspective was not mainstreamed systematically throughout all reports.
3a	Extent to which violations of women's and girls' human rights are reported, referred, and investigated by human rights bodies	DK	DK	DK	Human rights bodies' poor data collection systems made it impossible to examine gender disaggregated data on the types of cases reported, referred, and investigated.	Human rights bodies started collecting gender disaggregated data. However, it is still difficult to assess referred and investigated cases, given existing data management systems.
3b	Number and percentage share of women in governance bodies of national	0	1	= since 2000 + since 2011	Men have led all of these institutions since their establishment in Kosovo.	A few women have been in leadership positions, though precise data

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
	human right bodies					was difficult to obtain.
III. International, national, and non-State security actors are responsive to and held to account for any violations of the rights of women and girls, in line with international standards						
4	Percentage of reported cases of sexual exploitation and abuse allegedly perpetrated by uniformed civilian peace-keepers and/or humanitarian workers that are acted upon out of the total number of referred cases	DK	DK	DK, but perhaps +	Calculating the percentage is difficult due to insufficient information. However, qualitative information suggests that such cases occurred and were insufficiently acted upon due to diplomatic immunity.	Still minimal transparency regarding sexual exploitation cases makes it difficult to calculate a percentage. Nevertheless, UNMIK has taken action in two cases (100%).
5a	Extent to which measures to protect women's and girls' human rights are included in directives issued by heads of military components and heads	1	2	+	The UNMIK Police, KFOR, and EULEX seem to have been slow in installing these directives, though this improved with time.	While directives could not be reviewed, generally several policies and strategies have been established in this regard.

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
	of police components of peace-keeping missions					
5b	Extent to which measures to protect women's and girls' human rights are included in national security policy frameworks	1	1	+ since 2000 = since 2011	The Kosovo Police and KSF have installed measures. The National Security Strategy still being drafted could attend more to women's and girls' human rights.	The police and KSF have installed additional measures. However, the security strategy does not adequately reflect women's security needs.
<p>IV. Provisions addressing the specific needs and issues of women and girls are included in early warning systems and conflict prevention mechanisms and their implementation is monitored</p>						
6	Number and type of actions taken by the Security Council related to Resolution 1325	0	0	=	Related to Kosovo, the Security Council has not taken any known actions.	Related to Kosovo, the Security Council has not taken any known actions.
7	Number and percentage share of women in executive positions of relevant regional and	1	1	+	Women are under-represented in the European Parliament, EC, NATO, and OSCE. Only one	Women are better represented than previously, but still under-represented.

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
	subregional organisations involved in preventing conflict				known woman in a leadership position in these organisations has represented Kosovar women's needs.	
PARTICIPATION						
V. Inclusion of women and women's interests in decision-making processes related to the prevention, management, and resolution of conflicts						
8	Percentage of peace agreements with specific provisions to improve the security and status of women and girls	0	0	=	Perhaps since UNSCR 1244 preceded Resolution 1325, there is no mention of women and girls in Resolution 1244.	No peace agreement in Kosovo has included provisions to improve the security and status of women and girls.
VI. Increased representation and meaningful participation of women in United Nations and other international missions related to peace and security						
9	Women's share of senior positions in United Nations field missions	1	1	+	More women have senior positions in Kosovo now, compared to after the war, but they are still under-represented.	More women in leadership positions (40%), but still not equal. The SRSG position was never held by a woman.

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
10	Percentage of field missions with senior gender experts	1	2	+	Progress with UNDP's senior level gender advisor. Qualitatively, gender experts seem to have struggled to mainstream gender in their missions.	All relevant missions now have gender advisors and/or experts.
VII. Increased representation and meaningful participation of women in formal and informal peace negotiations and peace building processes						
11a	Representation of women among mediators, negotiators, and technical experts in formal peace negotiations	1	1	+ since 2000 = since 2011	UNMIK and Kosovo leaders failed to involve women initially. Progress with Edita Tahiri leading the present Dialogue with Serbia, but women under-consulted during the negotiations to date.	Edita Tahiri continued to lead the Dialogue with Serbia until 2017. From 2011 to 2017, women comprised 16% of working group members. Women's voices were under-represented in issues discussed.
11b	Women's participation in official observer status, at the beginning and the end of formal	0	0	=	Never existed.	Never existed.

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
	peace negotiations					
VIII. Increased representation and meaningful participation of women in national and local governance, as citizens, elected officials and decision makers						
12a	Women's political participation in parliaments and ministerial positions	1	1	+	Limited progress as more women have been elected without the quota (35% in 2007) and appointed to decision-making positions. Women are still under-represented at the municipal level and in ministerial positions.	Women's political participation improved in parliament; more women elected without the quota (67% in 2019) and more women in ministerial positions (15%). However, women still under-represented.
12b	Women's political participation as voters and candidates	DK	0	=	KWN could not secure data from OSCE and Kosovo Central Election Commission. In 2010 Assembly Elections, 34% of candidates were women. Women comprised 38% of voters.	In 2019 Assembly Elections, 32% of candidates were women. Women voters comprised 38%. Similar over time.

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
IX. Increased participation of women and women's organisations in activities to prevent, manage, resolve and respond to conflict and violations of women's and girls' human rights						
13	Extent to which Security Council missions address specific issues affecting women and girls in the terms of reference and mission reports	0	0	=	UN Security Council missions did not prioritise meeting with women. Three of four reviewed reports by Security Council monitoring missions visiting Kosovo did not mention women or girls.	There were no known additional Security Council missions during this period.
PROTECTION						
X. Safety, physical, and mental health of women and girls and their economic security are assured and their human rights respected						
14	Index of women's and girls' physical security	DK	1	+	No such representative, quantitative survey has been conducted.	No such data exist on diverse women's perceptions of security, by location and time of day, or ability to participate in public life and other activities.

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
XI. Political, economic, social, and cultural rights of women and girls are protected and enforced by national laws in line with international standards						
15	Extent to which national laws to protect women's and girls' human rights are in line with international standards	1	1	+	The establishment of national legislation protecting women and girls, in line with international standards, is among the greatest successes in post-conflict Kosovo. However, systematic exceptions to the application of existing legislation exist. Implementation remains problematic.	Although legislation is primarily in line with international standards, opportunities exist for improvement, particularly related to the Istanbul Convention. Implementation remains a problem.
XII. Operational mechanisms and structures in place for strengthening physical security and safety for women and girls						
16	Level of women's participation in the justice, security, and foreign service sectors	1	1	+ Justice and Foreign Service - Security Sector	Efforts to attract and retain women have led to increases in the number of women at various levels of justice and	The percentage of women in justice and foreign service has increased. The percentage

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
					security sectors. However, women are still under-represented in all sectors, particularly in decision-making positions. Women's participation in the foreign service has been very limited.	in the security sector has decreased. Overall, women remain under-represented in all, particularly in leadership positions.
17	Existence of national mechanisms for control of illicit small arms and light weapons	1	2	+	The law has been established. However, national level record-keeping must be improved. Weapons appear to remain widespread and have been used to perpetrate domestic violence.	National coordination agency and records exist. Improved research and record-keeping.
XIII. Women and girls at risk have access to livelihood support services						
18	Percentage of benefits from temporary employment in the	DK	NA	DK	No known such programs existed in Kosovo.	Not relevant as no longer "early economic recovery" period. Other

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
	context of early economic recovery programs received by women and girls					economic programs supporting women exist.
XIV. Increased access to justice for women whose rights are violated						
19	Percentage of referred cases of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls that are reported, investigated, and sentenced	DK	DK	DK	Lack of national level data collection systems where cases are disaggregated by gender meant this could not be measured	Kosovo still lacks a data collection system enabling the tracking of cases through the justice system.
20	Hours of training per capita of decision-making personnel in security and justice sector institutions to address cases of sexual and gender-based violence	1	1	+	Training for international institutions with security responsibilities seems to have been largely <i>ad hoc</i> . The Kosovo Police and KSF institution-alised training. The justice system provided "needs based" training on	All international institutions have increased the number and variety of mandatory trainings. Sometimes managerial staff attended. Kosovo security institutions require training. Justice sector has specialised

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
					this topic recently.	training, but it is not obligatory for all.
RELIEF & RECOVERY						
XV. Women's and girls' specific reproductive health needs are met in conflict and post-conflict situations						
21a	Maternal mortality rate; changes in quality of services available; factors preventing access	1	1	+ in 2011 = in 2020	Data inaccurate; some services established so the situation has improved since the war, but it remains inadequate. Rural and single women in particular lack access due to distance, insufficient finances, and sometimes cultural norms.	Kosovo still lacks accurate data. Women face similar challenges accessing health services, particularly in rural areas and where maternity wards have closed.
21b	Educational enrolment, disaggregated by sex	1	1	+	While girls' overall enrolment seems to have improved slightly since 2002, rural girls and Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and Gorani girls still lack equal access.	Girls now have equal enrolment at all levels. Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian, and Gorani girls still lack equal access.

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
XVI. The needs of women and girls, especially vulnerable groups (internally displaced persons, victims of sexual and gender-based violence, ex-combatants, refugees, returnees) are addressed in relief, early recovery, and economic recovery programs						
22a	Proportion of budget related to indicators that address gender equality issues in strategic planning frameworks	DK	DK	DK	No data available.	Data still unavailable, given weak implementation of gender-responsive budgeting.
22b	Proportion of budget related to targets that address gender equality issues in strategic planning frameworks	DK	DK	DK	No data available.	Data still unavailable, given weak implementation of gender-responsive budgeting.
23a	Proportion of total disbursed funding to civil society organisations that is allocated to address gender equality issues	DK	DK	DK	No data available.	Actors still do not maintain disaggregated data. While no data is available, some positive developments reported by women's rights CSOs.
23b	Proportion of total disbursed funding to	DK	DK	DK	No data available.	As above.

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
	support gender equality issues that is allocated to civil society organisations					
24a	Proportion of disbursed Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MDTFs) used to address gender equality issues	DK	DK	DK	No data available.	For Kosovo specifically, difficult to obtain accurate data.
24b	Proportion of total spending of the United Nations system used to support gender equality issues	DK	DK	DK	No data available.	No consolidated database exists to enable accurate tracking, including for Kosovo. Gender equality focused projects can be tracked, but funding for gender-mainstreamed programs cannot.
XVII. Post-conflict institutions and processes of transitional justice, reconciliation and reconstruction are gender responsive						
25	Truth and Reconciliation	1	1	+	Insufficient prosecution of crimes	No such official commissions

Nr.	Indicator	Score 2011	Score 2020	Progress/Regress	Explanation 2011	Explanation 2020
	Commissions include provisions to address the rights and participation of women and girls				committed against women in Kosovo; improved witness protection, but women feel it is still insufficient.	have existed. Women organised the alternative Women's Court.
XVIII. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform programs address the specific security and other needs of female security actors, ex-combatants, and women and girls associated with armed groups						
26a	Percentage of benefits from reparation programs received by women and girls	0	0	=	There have not been any reparations for anyone.	There still have not been any reparations for anyone.
26b	Percentage of benefits from DDR programs received by women and girls	DK	1	+	Data disaggregated by gender unavailable, though some women benefitted from these programs.	In 2020, 8% of beneficiaries were women.

Annex 2. The Methodology

The UN Secretary-General's proposed indicators for monitoring the implementation of Resolution 1325 guided the research (see Annex 1), informing all research questions, interview protocols, and data collection choices. Researchers interviewed representatives of various institutions, selected based on their responsibility for implementing the Resolution or their knowledge about its implementation (see Annex 3). Researchers collaborated to transcribe, translate into English, and code (analyse) the data, testing initial findings during future interviews. They also drew from interviews conducted in 2007 and 2009, during prior KWN monitoring exercises, towards identifying any changes in the Resolution's implementation over time. Researchers scoured the internet for information, reviewed texts, and requested statistics from institutions.

The researchers drafted chapters based on the four "pillars" proposed by the UN Secretary-General: Prevention, Participation, Protection, and Relief and Recovery. The writing involved an iterative process: new interviews tested early findings, and statistics were added as they trickled in. Communication flew transnationally as the researchers wrote, edited, and re-edited from diverse locations.

When the editor sat down to put it all together, something was not quite right. The chapters repeated each other as the indicators overlapped. The indicators seemed to constrict and stifle the rich stories participants had told. She significantly edited the first draft with assistance, insight, and moral support from Anna Di Lellio, professor of International Relations at the New School and New York University. Meanwhile, research participants reviewed excerpts and quotations, offering feedback.

For the second edition, new stories were incorporated into the existing *1325 Facts & Fables* publication, focusing on any changes since the first edition. Sometimes this made

sections too long, given the substantial new content, and the team created a few new sub-sections to facilitate reading and better illustrate changes that occurred between 2011 and 2020. All stories remained related to the UN Secretary-General's indicators. The draft was circulated to some research participants for their review prior to finalisation. During participant reviews of both editions, some participants wrote paragraphs of additional information that they wanted included and/or suggested changing the history documented in the first edition. Space restrictions and the context meant that accommodating additional information was not always possible, though the research team tried to correct any factual mistakes. The team avoided changing the history already published in 2011, as it illustrates the changes that have occurred over time.

Writing a twenty-year history is no easy undertaking. Add summer vacations, institutional bureaucracy, concerns raised in participant checks, the COVID-19 pandemic, and translation, and this was quite the challenge. Institutions' record-keeping practices were poor and data was missing. Although participant checks sought to validate findings and minimise error, mistakes may exist, and for these the authors apologise. Also, the research team acknowledges that further changes have occurred since the end of this twenty-year story, but these were beyond this story's timeframe and thus not included here.

This book was made possible primarily thanks to the researchers and writers who volunteered several months of their time for researching and writing both editions. The research also received contributions from Austrian Development and Cooperation in 2011 and 2020. Findings in this second edition drew from interviews conducted with support from UN Women in 2020 for the KWN publication *A Seat at the Table*, when research participants consented for their interviews to be used for both publications. The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation provided support for final revisions, translating, and editing the second edition.

Annex 3. Research Participants

The following table enlists the research participants from 2007, 2009, and 2011. In instances where they have held multiple positions over time, their most recent position is listed first.

#	Name	Position	Institution
1.	Albert Avdiu	Head of the Secretariat	Kosovo Judicial Council
2.	Arbena Kuriu	Program Officer	OHCHR
3.	Ariana Qosaj-Mustata	Legal Advisor / former National Advisor for Women and Children	Office of the President of the Republic of Kosovo / OSCE
4.	Arjeta Rexhaj	Political Advisor / former Director	Head of Dialogue, Edita Tahiri's office / Centre for Gender Training and Studies
5.	Bajram Pajaziti	Director	Department of Martyrs' Families and War Invalids, Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare
6.	Behar Selimi	MP / former General Director	PDK / Kosovo Police
7.	Bekim Ajdini	Public Information Officer	IOM
8.	Belgjzare Muharremi	Director	Open Door women's organisation

#	Name	Position	Institution
9.	Besim M. Kajtazi	Head	Human Rights Department, Office of the Prime Minister, Republic of Kosovo
10.	Brigitte Holzner, Violeta Rexha, Irina Gudelijevic	Gender Advisor, Human Rights and Gender Officer, Spokesperson	EULEX
11.	Christos Theodoropoulos		UNHCR
12.	Clare Hutchinson	Former Gender Advisor	Office of Gender Affairs, UNMIK
13.	Doina Bologna, Visare Mujko Nimani	Chief of Operation, National Program Officer	UNFPA
14.	Donika Kadaj	MP	AAK
15.	Edita Tahiri	Head of Technical Dialogue, Deputy Prime Minister	Republic of Kosovo
16.	Elife Krasniqi	Activist	
17.	Elisabeth Schleicher	Gender Advisor	KFOR
18.	Enver Peci	Chair	Kosovo Judicial Council
19.	Fahri Sadriu	Head of G9 / former Gender Focal Point	KSF / Kosovo Protection Corps
20.	Flora Macula	Officer in Charge	UN Women
21.	Frode Mauring	Former Head	UNDP
22.	Habit Hajredini	Director	Office of Good Governance, Equal Opportunities and

#	Name	Position	Institution
			Gender, Office of the Prime Minister
23.	Halime Morina	Coordinator	Human Rights Unit, Ministry of Kosovo Security Force
24.	Hysni Shala	Human Rights Coordinator	Kosovo Police
25.	Igballe Rogova	Executive Director	KWN
26.	Jean Wakam	Head	Conduct & Discipline Team, UNMIK
27.	Jocelyne Talbot	Gender Advisor	UNDP
28.	Lina Andeer	Field Representative	The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation
29.	Lorik Pustina		ICO
30.	Luciano Calestini, Aferdita Spahiu, Laura Fragiacomio		UNICEF
31.	Luljeta Domaniku	Gender Advisor	Ombudsperson Institution
32.	Luljeta Vuniqi	Executive Director	KGSC
33.	Mehdi Geci		AGE (2007)
34.	Merita Halitaj	Director	One to One
35.		Department of Finance	Ministry of Health
36.	Muharrem Xhemajli	Head	Organisation of Veterans of the Kosovo Liberation Army
37.	Nagip Skenderi	Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
38.	Naime Sherifi	President of the Board	Coalition of Women's Shelters
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44.	Philippe Tissot	External Affairs	Office of the SRSG, UNMIK
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48.	Shpresa Agushi	Director	RROGRAEK
49.	Shpresa Mulliqi	Public Safety Awareness Officer	Special Advisory Unit, Director's Office, Department for Security and Public Safety, OSCE Mission in Kosovo
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52.	Sirpa Rautio	Former Head	Human Rights and Gender Equality Office, EULEX
53.	Skender Sylja	Head	WHO
54.	Snezana Karadžić	Director	Women's Committee for Protection of Human Rights
55.	Tahire Haxholli	Lieutenant	Kosovo Police

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56.	Tanya Castle	Public Information Officer	UNMIK
57.	Teuta Sahatqija	MP	LDK
58.	Theodora Krumova	Human Rights Officer	OHCHR
59.	Tilly Stroosnijder	Gender Advisor	UNMIK Police
60.	Valbona Salihu	Director	Norma Lawyers' Association
61.	Veproje Shehu	Executive Director	medica Kosova
62.	Visare Gorani Gashi	Program Officer	Democratic Governance and Human Rights, Embassy of Sweden
63.	Violeta (Krasniqi) Rexha	(Prior position, 2007)	Ombudsperson Institution
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The research participants in 2020 included:

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5.	Biljana Nastovska	Gender Advisor	OSCE Mission in Kosovo
6.	Balkan Investigative Reporting Network		
7.	Chiara Tagliani	Gender Advisor	EULEX Kosovo
8.	Edi Gusia	Chief Executive Officer	AGE

#	Name	Position	Institution
9.	Edita Tahiri	Former Chief Negotiator of the Dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia	Republic of Kosovo
10.	Elisabeth Schleicher	Chief	GENAD, KFOR
11.	Elvanda Gojani	Coordinator	Coalition K10
12.	Feride Rushiti	Executive Director	KRCT
13.	Fitore Berisha	Administrative Assistant	GENAD, KFOR
14.	Habit Hajredini	Head	Office of Good Governance, Equal Opportunities and Gender, Office of the Prime Minister
15.	Halime Morina	Head	Unit for Human Rights and Gender Equality, KSF
16.	Hysni Shala	Head	Team one of internal investigations and background checks, General Directorate, Kosovo Police
17.	Igballe Rogova	Executive Director	KWN
18.	Javiera Thais Santa Cruz	Gender Advisor	UNMIK
19.	Joanne Naughton	Deputy	GENAD, KFOR
20.	Luljeta Demolli	Executive Director	KGSC
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26.	Nora Ahmetaj	Freelance Consultant on Transitional Justice	
27.	Resmije Rahmani	Founder	OPDMK
28.	Reyes Charle Cuellar	Gender Advisor	EUSR
29.	Rina Gjana	Project Officer	UNDP
30.	Roska Vrgova	Senior Political Officer	OSCE Mission in Kosovo
31.	Shpresa Agushi	Executive Director	RROGRAEK
32.	Tahire Haxholli	Major, Chief	Sector for Services and Administration of Trainings, Kosovo Police
33.	Tijana Simić LaValley	Executive Director	<i>Zensko Pravo</i> [Women's Rights]
34.	Veprora Shehu	Executive Director	Medica Kosova
35.	Vesna Stajić	Executive Director	UDZ Naš Dom
36.	Vjosa Osmani	Acting President	Republic of Kosovo
37.	Vlora Tuzi Nushi	Head of Office	UN Women

Annex 4. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed unanimously on 31 October 2000. Resolution (S/RES/1325) is the first resolution ever passed by the Security Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women, and women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace.

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President and recalling also the statement of its President, to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the twenty-first century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full

participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. **Urges** Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;
2. **Encourages** the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;
3. **Urges** the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;
4. **Further** urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;
5. **Expresses** its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;
6. **Requests** the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and

peace-building measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. ***Urges*** Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;
8. ***Calls*** on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia: (a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction; (b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements; (c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;
9. ***Calls*** upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention Security Council - 5 - Press Release SC/6942

4213th Meeting (PM) 31 October 2000 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. ***Calls*** on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;
11. ***Emphasizes*** the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes including those relating to sexual violence against women and girls, and in this regard, stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;
12. ***Calls*** upon all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolution 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998;
13. ***Encourages*** all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;
14. ***Reaffirms*** its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women

and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. **Expresses** its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;
16. **Invites** the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;
17. **Requests** the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council, progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;
18. **Decides** to remain actively seized of the matter.

Source: <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/1325.html#Full>

ENDNOTES

Introduction

¹ Rogova referred to the four supporting resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council, 1820, 1888, 1889, and 1960, which she calls "sister resolutions".

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³ Merriam Webster Online Dictionary, "Fables", at: <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fables>.

⁴ KWN correspondence and interview with Osnat Lubrani, UNDP Resident Representative, Pristina, 2011.

⁵ UNIFEM, *Gender Mainstreaming: An Overview*, UNIFEM, 2002.

⁶ KWN interview with Nazlie Bala, Coordinator, UNDP Women's Safety and Security Initiative, Pristina, 2011.

⁷ KWN interview with Elisabeth Schleicher, KFOR Gender Advisor, Pristina, 2011.

⁸ KWN interview with KFOR representatives, Pristina, 2020.

⁹ KWN interview with Clare Hutchinson, former UNMIK Gender Advisor, Pristina, 2007.

¹⁰ Every resolution adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations is obligatory; Resolution 1325 and its sister resolutions were adopted under Chapter VI. Thus, some argue that it is not legally binding. However, given its unanimous adoption, NGOs tend to regard it as legally binding. See Shepherd, L., "Power and Authority in the Production of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325", *International Studies Quarterly*, 2008, at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2478.2008.00506.x>; and Tryggestad, T. L., "Trick or Treat? The UN and Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security", *Global Governance*, 2009, at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/19426720-01504011>.

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¹³ KWN interview with Frode Mouring, UNDP, Pristina, 2007.

¹⁴ In Kosovo, the general approach of “constitutionalisation without ratification” poses challenges especially due to the lack of enforcement mechanisms (De Hert, P. and Korenica, F., “The New Kosovo Constitution and its Relationship with the European Convention on Human Rights: Constitutionalization ‘Without’ Ratification in Post-Conflict Societies”, *ZaöRV* 76(1), 2016, p. 165, at: http://www.zaoerv.de/76_2016/76_2016_1_a_143_166.pdf).

¹⁵ KWN interview with UNDP representatives, Pristina, 2020.

¹⁶ Law on Gender Equality 2004/2 and Law on Gender Equality 05/L-020.

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¹⁸ KWN interview with Edi Gusia, 2020.

¹⁹ Government of Kosovo, Agency for Gender Equality, Kosovo Program for Gender Equality 2020-2024, 2020, at: <https://abgj.rks-gov.net/assets/cms/uploads/files/AGE%20Kosovo%20Program%20for%20Gender%20Equality%202020-2024.pdf>.

²⁰ Ministry of KSF and KSF, “Human Rights and Gender Equality Policy in MKSF and KSF”, 2011; Ministry of Defense and KSF, “Policy on Human Rights and Gender Parity in Ministry of Defense and Kosovo Security Force”, 2019. Training curricula in the KSF and Kosovo Police was adopted in accordance with Resolution 1325 and gender equality.

²¹ EULEX, “Factsheet on EU Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo.”

²² Initially: Council of the European Union, Secretariat, “Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the context of ESDP,” Brussels: 29 September 2005. Later, European Parliament, “European Common Security and Defence Policy”, at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/ftu/pdf/en/FTU_5.1.2.pdf; Council of the European Union, “Implementation of UNSCR 1325 as reinforced by UNSCR 1820 in the context of ESDP”, Brussels: 3 December 2008, at: <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-15782-2008->

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Participation

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<http://www.nato.int/kosovo/docu/a990609a.htm>.

⁶ UN Secretary-General, goal V, indicator 8 defines "peace agreements" as "contracts intended to end or significantly transform a violent conflict so that it may be addressed more constructively."

⁷ UN Secretary-General, indicator 8.

⁸ Igballe Rogova, "Networking: The Key to Peacebuilding and Organising for a Better Future", speech at the International Women's Conference of the feminist Peace Organisation CFD, 22-24 May 2003, Zurich, Switzerland, at: http://www.cfd-ch.org/womanoeuvres/wmo_ws_ref_rogova.html.

- ⁹ KWN correspondence with Veprora Shehu, Executive Director, medica Kosova, 2011.
- ¹⁰ UNMIK's tendency to reinforce patriarchy was a recurring theme among research participants.
- ¹¹ See also, Lesley Abdela, "Men with a Mission – No Women", 2 March 2000.
- ¹² KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, Pristina, 2007.
- ¹³ UN Secretary-General, indicator 7.
- ¹⁴ Peter Joseph Singhatey, "The Role of Regional Organizations in the Maintenance of International Peace and Security," p. 2.
- ¹⁵ KWN interview with Vetone Veliu, Executive Director, MWAHR, 2020.
- ¹⁶ KWN, "Activists Demand Women's Participation in Kosovo Talks", 2013, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/activists-demand-womens-quos-participation-in-kosovo-talks/>.
- ¹⁷ Catherine Ashton's Letter, 2014, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/20140129120425762.pdf>.
- ¹⁸ KWN interview with Feride Rushiti, 2020.
- ¹⁹ KWN interview with Yllka Soba, 2020.
- ²⁰ European Parliament, Resolution on Women's rights in Western Balkans (2018/2710(RSP)), 2018, at: https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/FEMM/DV/2019/01-23/1163876ENDraftmotionforresolutionWomensrightinWesternBalkans_EN.pdf.
- ²¹ Founded in 1993 amid wars in the former Yugoslavia, the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation is a women's peace organisation working in more than 20 conflict-affected countries by supporting 140 women's rights organisations. Kvinna till Kvinna has supported delegations of women's rights organisations to advocate to the EU in Brussels for more than a decade, particularly related to integrating a gender perspective in the EU Accession process, funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida). For more, see: <https://kvinnatillkvinna.org/about-us/who-we-are/>.
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- ²⁶ UN Secretary-General, goal VI, indicator 9.
- ²⁷ Before the establishment of the EU Office in Kosovo, between the period of 2006 and 2008, Torbjorn Sohlstrom and Jonas Jonsson headed the EU Mission in Kosovo as part of the preparatory team for the International Civilian Mission in Kosovo.
- ²⁸ KWN interview with Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, women's rights activist, Pristina, 2011.
- ²⁹ KWN interview with Flora Macula, UN Women (then UNIFEM), Pristina, 2007.
- ³⁰ KWN interview with Clare Hutchinson, 2007.
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- ³² KWN interview with Luljeta Vuniqui, Executive Director, KGSC, Pristina, 2011. Other research participants made similar statements.
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- ³⁶ Comment on the draft by Chiara Tagliani, Gender Adviser, EULEX, 2020.
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- ³⁸ KWN interview with Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, 2020.
- ³⁹ KWN interview with Clare Hutchinson, 2007.
- ⁴⁰ KWN correspondence with EULEX, October 2011.
- ⁴¹ KWN interview with Chiara Tagliani, Gender Adviser, EULEX, 2020.
- ⁴² UN Secretary-General, indicator 10 on the presence of senior gender experts in UN field missions.
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- ⁴⁴ KWN interview with Clare Hutchinson, 2007.
- ⁴⁵ KWN interview with Luljeta Vuniqui, 2007.
- ⁴⁶ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2011.
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- ⁴⁸ KWN interview with Luljeta Vuniqi, 2007.
- ⁴⁹ KWN interview with Arjeta Rexhaj, Political Advisor to Deputy Prime Minister Edita Tahiri, Pristina, 26 July 2011.
- ⁵⁰ KWN interview with Javiera Thais Santa Cruz, 2020.
- ⁵¹ Ibid.
- ⁵² Ibid.
- ⁵³ UNMIK, “UNMIK: Creating A Workplace Where Both Women & Men Can Thrive”, 2019, at: <https://unmik.unmissions.org/unmik-creating-workplace-where-both-women-men-can-thrive>.
- ⁵⁴ KWN interview with Javiera Thais Santa Cruz, 2020.
- ⁵⁵ Ibid.
- ⁵⁶ For further information about these efforts, see KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, 2021.
- ⁵⁷ See KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, 2021.
- ⁵⁸ KWN interview with Tijana Simić LaValley, 2020.
- ⁵⁹ KWN correspondence with EULEX, 2011.
- ⁶⁰ KWN interview with Chiara Tagliani, 2020.
- ⁶¹ Ibid.
- ⁶² Ibid.
- ⁶³ European Commission, “EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in EU External Action”.
- ⁶⁴ Ibid.
- ⁶⁵ KWN interview with Reyes Charle Cuellar, 2020.
- ⁶⁶ KWN interview with Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, Pristina, 2011.
- ⁶⁷ KWN interview with Theodora Krumova, Pristina, 2011.
- ⁶⁸ KWN interview with Jocelyne Talbot, Pristina, 2011.
- ⁶⁹ KWN interview with Biljana Nastovska, 2020 and correspondence in 2021.
- ⁷⁰ KWN interview with Biljana Nastovska, 2020.
- ⁷¹ KWN interview, 2020.
- ⁷² The approach of establishing senior gender advisors at senior management levels began in 2009 in conflict and post-conflict countries as an initiative of UNDP Global. UNDP Kosovo was one of the UNDP country offices selected to initiate this new approach (KWN correspondence with Jocelyne Talbot, 2011).
- ⁷³ See the chapter, “Safeguarding women’s livelihoods”.
- ⁷⁴ UNDP in Kosovo official webpage, accessed 2011.

⁷⁵ UN, “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, at: <https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>.

⁷⁶ UNDP, “UNDP Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021”, New York: UNDP, 2019, p. 18, at:

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⁷⁷ UNDP programs are framed within the “UNDP Gender Equality Strategy” and the UNDP 8 Point Agenda (Resolution 1325) to mainstream gender; UNFPA mainstreams gender equality in line with principles of the first International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, Millennium Development Goals, and SDGs.

More at: <https://kosovo.unfpa.org/en/node/9664>; the UNICEF Gender Action Plan 2018-2021 serves as a guide for its work. More at: <https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/reports/gender-equality>. At the global level, IOM has a “Gender Equality Policy 2015-2019” (at: <https://www.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbd1486/files/2018-07/C-106-INF-8-Rev.1-IOM-Gender-Equality-Policy-2015-2019.pdf>),

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⁷⁸ UN Women, “A Repository of Policies, Strategies and Action Plans on Gender Mainstreaming within the United Nations System developed by UN Women”, 2015.

⁷⁹ According to research conducted in 2013, SGG was not meant to serve as an inter-coordination mechanism between UN Women and other UN agencies. However, it has served as among the main mechanisms in terms of gender equality for inter-agency coordination.

⁸⁰ SGG is a multi-stakeholder group established in 2007. It consists of CSOs like the Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, KWN, KGSC, and Association of Women in the Kosovo Police; Kosovo institutions like AGE, Women’s Caucus, Kosovo Police, KSF, Victim Advocates, and the National Coordinator against Domestic Violence in the Ministry of Justice; and international organisations and actors like UN Women, UNDP, UNICEF, UN-HABITAT, OHCHR, UNFPA, WHO, UNOPS, UNHCR, UNMIK, the EU Office, EULEX, OSCE, and KFOR.

⁸¹ Email correspondence with a representative of UNDP, 2020.

⁸² Comment on draft publication, 2021.

- ⁸³ KWN, *Annual Report 2007*, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/category/publications/annual-reports/>, p. 15.
- ⁸⁴ KWN interview with Luljeta Vuniqi, 2007.
- ⁸⁵ KWN interview with Belgjzare Muharremi, Director of Open Door women's organisation, Pristina, 2011.
- ⁸⁶ NATO, Newsroom, "Improving gender awareness in KFOR", 17 May 2011, at: http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/news_74396.htm.
- ⁸⁷ KWN interview with Elisabeth Schleicher, Pristina, 2011.
- ⁸⁸ KWN interview with KFOR representatives, Pristina, 2020.
- ⁸⁹ NATO, KFOR website, "KFOR held gender perspective day 2017", at: <https://jfcnaples.nato.int/kfor/media-center/archive/news/2017/kfor-held-gender-perspective-day-2017>.
- ⁹⁰ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2020.
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- ⁹² UN Secretary-General, goal IX, indicator 13. This is measured by reviewing the "extent to which Security Council missions address specific issues affecting women and girls in the terms of reference and mission reports."
- ⁹³ UN Security Council, "Report of the Security Council Mission to Kosovo and Belgrade, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia," S2002/1376, 19 December 2002, at: <http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/kos%20S2002%201376.pdf>.
- ⁹⁴ KWN, *Monitoring Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Kosova*, Pristina: KWN, 2009, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/publications/monitoring-implementation-of-united-nations-security-council-resolution-1325-in-kosova-2nd-edition/>.
- ⁹⁵ UN Security Council, "Letter dated 7 October 2005 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council", S/2005/63, 7 October 2005.
- ⁹⁶ Ibid.
- ⁹⁷ Other reports perhaps mentioned women, but we could only find four reports. Two were on the UN Security Council webpage and two were attached to UN Secretary-General letters related to reports from Martti Ahtisaari and Kai Eide. All were accessed online in 2011.

- ⁹⁸ UN Security Council Mission, "Report of the Security Council Mission to Kosovo and Belgrade, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia 14-17 December 2002", p. 11.
- ⁹⁹ Ibid, p. 8.
- ¹⁰⁰ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2007.
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰² KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2007.
- ¹⁰³ KWN interview with Luljeta Vuniqi, 2011.
- ¹⁰⁴ UN Secretary-General, goal VII, indicator 11, "level of participation of women in formal negotiations" and "presence of women in a formal observer or consultative status at the beginning and the end of peace negotiations".
- ¹⁰⁵ KWN correspondence with Veprora Shehu, 2011.
- ¹⁰⁶ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2011.
- ¹⁰⁷ KWN interview with Luljeta Vuniqi, 2007.
- ¹⁰⁸ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2007.
- ¹⁰⁹ Letters at: www.womensnetwork.org.
- ¹¹⁰ UN Department of Public Information, "Press Conference on Security Council fact-finding mission to Belgrade and Kosovo", 24 April 2007, at: <http://reliefweb.int/node/231508>.
- ¹¹¹ KWN interview with Teuta Sahatqija, MP for LDK, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹¹² KWN interview with Flora Macula, UN Women, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹¹³ UN Secretary-General, indicator 8.
- ¹¹⁴ UN Security Council, "Letter dated 26 March 2007 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council: Addendum Comprehensive Proposal for the Kosovo Status Settlement", S/2007/168/Add.1, 26 March 2007.
- ¹¹⁵ UN Secretary-General, indicator 11.
- ¹¹⁶ KWN interview with Arjeta Rexhaj, Political Advisor to Edita Tahiri, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹¹⁷ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2011.
- ¹¹⁸ KWN interview with Edita Tahiri, Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Policy and National Security, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹¹⁹ KWN interview with Edi Gusia, AGE, 2020.
- ¹²⁰ KWN interview with Zana Hoxha, 2020.
- ¹²¹ KWN interview with Yllka Soba, 2020.
- ¹²² KWN interview with Edita Tahiri, 2020.
- ¹²³ KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, p. 110.
- ¹²⁴ KWN interview with Javiera Thais Santa Cruz, 2020.

¹²⁵ KWN interview with Reyes Charle Cuellar, 2020.

¹²⁶ KWN interview with Edita Tahiri, 2011.

¹²⁷ As per UN Secretary-General indicator 12b, Kosovo's Central Election Commission (CEC) did not possess gender-disaggregated data on the number of registered and actual voters in 2011 (KWN phone conversation with Xhemail Pecani, Executive Secretary, CEC, 10 November 2011).

¹²⁸ UN Secretary-General Goal VIII, indicator 12.

¹²⁹ Elections for the Assembly of Kosovo, UNMIK Regulation no. 2004/12 promulgated on 5 May 2004, sec. 21 and UNMIK regulation no. 2000/39 on the Municipal Election in Kosovo on 8 July 2000, sec. 4.2.

¹³⁰ The Kosovo Women's Lobby (KWL) emerged out of the process of drafting the National Action Plan on the Achievement of Gender Equality, a process that involved women in civil society and women in politics. The group was *ad hoc* and involved individual members in an attempt to avoid institutional and political party pressure on women. Even so, political party alliances meant that some women later refused to become involved in the Lobby's advocacy efforts. Without an agreed upon coordination structure, the group slowly disintegrated. See KGSC, *History is Herstory too: The History of Women in Civil Society in Kosovo 1980-2004*, Pristina: KGSC, 2008, p. 195.

¹³¹ KWN interview with Edita Tahiri, 2011.

¹³² Institute Democracy for Development (D4D), *Deconstructing Election Trends 2000-2010*, Pristina: D4D, 2011.

¹³³ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2011.

¹³⁴ KWN interview with Behar Selimi, MP for PDK, Pristina, 2011.

¹³⁵ UN Secretary-General, indicator 12b.

¹³⁶ European Network of Election Monitoring Organizations (ENEMO), "Election Observation Mission, Kosovo Assembly Elections 2010, Final Report", 2011, at:

http://www.enemo.eu/press/ENEMO_final%20report_KOSOVO_EOM_2011.pdf.

¹³⁷ Central Election Commission, webpage, accessed in 2020.

¹³⁸ European Union Election Observation Mission, "Kosovo 2019 Final Report", 2019, at:

https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/212456/Kosovo_early-legislative-elections_6-October-2019_final-report.pdf.

- ¹³⁹ Central Election Commission, "Election Trends in the Republic of Kosovo 2009-2019", 2021. This did not include mail-in votes or votes of persons with different abilities.
- ¹⁴⁰ UN Secretary-General, goal VIII, indicator 12a.
- ¹⁴¹ Ariana Qosaj Mustafa for KIPRED, *Strengthening women's citizenship in the context of state building*, Pristina: KIPRED, 2010, p. 10.
- ¹⁴² KWN interview with Sevdije Ahmeti, women's rights activist, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹⁴³ KWN interview with Donika Kadaj, MP for AAK, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹⁴⁴ KWN interview with Teuta Sahatqija, MP for LDK, Pristina, 26 July 2011.
- ¹⁴⁵ KWN interview with Mimoza Kusari-Lila, 2020.
- ¹⁴⁶ UN Secretary-General, goal VIII, indicator 12a.
- ¹⁴⁷ KWN interview with Luljeta Demolli, 2020.
- ¹⁴⁸ KWN interview with Shpresa Agushi, 2007.
- ¹⁴⁹ KWN interview with Snezana Karazdić, Director, Women's Committee for the Protection of Human Rights, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹⁵⁰ KWN interview with Resmije Rahmani, 2020.
- ¹⁵¹ KWN interview with Teuta Sahatqija.
- ¹⁵² KWN interview with Flora Macula, 2020.
- ¹⁵³ KWN interview with Osnat Lubrani, 2011.
- ¹⁵⁴ KWN interview with Shpresa Agushi, 2011.
- ¹⁵⁵ KWN interview with Arjeta Rexhaj, 2011.
- ¹⁵⁶ KWN interview with Donika Kadaj, 2011.
- ¹⁵⁷ UN Women, webpage, "Young women from Kosovo are empowered to join politics", 2019, at: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/07/young-women-from-kosovo-are-empowered-to-join-politics>.
- ¹⁵⁸ KWN interview with Teuta Sahatqija, 2011.
- ¹⁵⁹ KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, pp. 89-91.
- ¹⁶⁰ Ibid, p. 74.
- ¹⁶¹ Vjosa Osmani, Speech, National Democratic Institute, "Week of Women Conference 2020".
- ¹⁶² Mimoza Kusari-Lila, speech at Kosovo Lobby for Gender Equality meeting "Women and Local Elections", Pristina, February 2021.
- ¹⁶³ UN Secretary-General, indicator 12a.
- ¹⁶⁴ KWN interview with Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, Advisor to President Jahjaga, Pristina, 2011.

- ¹⁶⁵ Data in reference to 2007.
- ¹⁶⁶ Data provided by the Office of the Prime Minister to KWN, 2021. It includes both governments of 2020.
- ¹⁶⁷ KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, 2021.
- ¹⁶⁸ KWN interview with Edita Tahiri, Pristina, 2020.
- ¹⁶⁹ Law on Gender Equality, No. 2004/2.
- ¹⁷⁰ Law on Gender Equality, Art. 3.2.
- ¹⁷¹ Kosovo has enacted a quota for women’s participation in the Parliament and municipal assemblies (please see the prior chapter).
- ¹⁷² Law on Gender Equality, Art. 3.5. Notably most streets in Kosovo are named after men. Teuta Sahatqija said this shows the “deeply rooted masculine mentality that is counter-productive when it comes to empowering women” (interview, 2011).
- ¹⁷³ Law on Gender Equality, Art. 5.2.
- ¹⁷⁴ KWN interview with Mehdi Geci, Pristina, 2007.
- ¹⁷⁵ KWN interview with Arjeta Rexhaj, 2007.
- ¹⁷⁶ KWN interview with Lujeta Vuniqu, 2007.
- ¹⁷⁷ KWN, *Monitoring Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Kosova*, 2009, p. 27.
- ¹⁷⁸ Law No. 05/L -020 on Gender Equality.
- ¹⁷⁹ KWN interview with Edi Gusia, 2020. UNDP also observed that they supported this process (KWN interview, 2020).
- ¹⁸⁰ AGE, “Kosovo Program for Gender Equality 2020-2024”, p. 15. 2020.
- ¹⁸¹ Igballe Rogova, speech, 15th Anniversary of AGE, 2020, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/a-discussion-about-the-importance-of-economic-empowerment-in-preventing-violence-against-women/>.
- ¹⁸² KWN interview with Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, 2020.
- ¹⁸³ KWN interview with Reyes Charle Cuellar, 2020.
- ¹⁸⁴ UN Secretary-General, goal 16: “Operational mechanisms and structures in place for strengthening physical security and safety for women and girls”.
- ¹⁸⁵ KWN interview with Hysni Shala, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹⁸⁶ KWN interview with Hysni Shala, 2011.
- ¹⁸⁷ KWN interviews with Behar Selimi, Pristina, 2007 and 2011.
- ¹⁸⁸ UN Secretary-General indicator 5b calls upon national security policy frameworks to protect women’s and girls’ rights.
- ¹⁸⁹ KWN interview with Behar Selimi, 2007.
- ¹⁹⁰ KWN interview with Behar Selimi, 2011.

- 191 KWN interview with Tahire Haxholli, 2020.
- 192 KWN interview with Vlora Tuzi Nushi, 2020.
- 193 KWN interview with Luljeta Demolli, 2020.
- 194 Data from the Kosovo Police, 2011 and 2020.
- 195 KWN interview with Hysni Shala, 2011 and 2020.
- 196 KWN interview with Shpresa Mulliqi, OSCE, Pristina, 2011.
- 197 KWN interview with Tahire Haxholli, 2011.
- 198 UN Secretary-General, indicator 16.
- 199 KWN interview with Hysni Shala, 2011.
- 200 KWN interview with Hysni Shala, 2020.
- 201 KWN interview with Atifete Jahjaga, 2020.
- 202 UN Women, *Establishing and Strengthening an Association of Women Police: The Case of the Association of Women in Kosovo Police*, Pristina: UN Women, 2015, p. 11, at: https://www2.unwomen.org/-/media/field%20office%20eca/attachments/publications/country/kosovo/awkp_english_preview.pdf?la=en&vs=2340.
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- 204 KWN interview with Flora Macula, 2020.
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- 206 KWN interview with Hysni Shala, now Head of the Internal Investigation Team and Verification of the Past in the Kosovo Police, 2020.
- 207 IOM, "Socio-economic and demographic profiles of former KLA Combatants Registered by IOM, Vol. 1", Pristina: IOM, 21 January 2000.
- 208 UN Secretary-General, indicator 26.
- 209 KWN correspondence with IOM, 5 October 2011.
- 210 John Durance and Pauline Menthonnex Gacaferri (ed.) for UNDP, "Informator: A KPC Resettlement Programme", Kosovo: UNDP, July 2011, p. 15.
- 211 Ibid, p. 5.
- 212 KWN interview with Shukrije Gashi, Pristina, 2011.
- 213 KWN interview with Muharrem Xhemajli, Pristina, 2011.
- 214 *Zeri*, "Veteranet te pakenqaur me ligjin" ["Veterans dissatisfied with the draft law"], 22 July 2011.
- 215 Koha Net, "Veteranet ne greve nese nuk zbatohet ligji i premtuar nga Thaqi" ["Veterans on strike if the law isn't implemented like

promised by Thaqi”], 15 November 2011. The Law on the Status and the Rights of the Families of Heroes, Invalids, Veterans and Members of KLA and of the Families of Civilian Victims of War, approved in 2006, did not initially include veterans (Law No. 02/L-2).

²¹⁶ Assembly of Kosovo, Law No. 04/L-054 on the Status and the Rights of the Martyrs, Invalids, Veterans, Members of Kosova Liberation Army, Civilian Victims of War and their Families, 2011.

²¹⁷ Law No. 04/L-261 on Kosovo Liberation Army War Veterans.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

²¹⁹ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, “Social Welfare Statistics Q3 2020”, 2020, at: <https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/5862/social-welfare-statistics-q3-2020.pdf>.

²²⁰ Ibid.

²²¹ KWN phone conversation with representative of the Office on Issues of Categories Deriving from the War, 2021.

²²² Balkan Insight, No Reward for Kosovo’s Women of War, 2013, at: <https://balkaninsight.com/2013/12/18/no-rewards-for-kosovo-s-women-of-war/>.

²²³ Out of 5,152 employees, 185 were women (SOK, *Women and Men*, Pristina: SOK, March 2009).

²²⁴ KWN interview with Fahri Sadriu, 2007.

²²⁵ KWN interview with Safet Sylja, Pristina, 2011.

²²⁶ Law No. 03/L-04 on the Kosovo Security Force.

²²⁷ KWN interview with Halime Morina, Pristina, 2011.

²²⁸ KWN interview with Fahri Sadriu, Pristina, 2011.

²²⁹ KWN interview with Halime Morina, 2020.

²³⁰ KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, pp. 75-115.

²³¹ Law No. 03/L-045 on Ministry of the Kosovo Security Force.

²³² Ministry of KSF and KSF, “Action Plan for the Implementation of Human Rights and Gender Equality Policy in MKSF and KSF”.

²³³ KWN correspondence with Halime Morina, 2011.

²³⁴ KWN interview with Halime Morina, 2020.

²³⁵ Ibid.

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ In 2018, women comprised 28 percent of the Ministry of Defense staff and only 7 percent of decision-making positions (KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, p. 115).

²³⁸ KWN interview with Halime Morina, 2020.

²³⁹ UN Secretary-General, indicator 5b.

- ²⁴⁰ Ministry of KSF, "Security Strategy", 2010, Article 2.3, p. 6.
- ²⁴¹ Government of Kosovo, "Draft Security Strategy of Kosovo 2021-2025", 2020, at: <https://konsultimet.rks-gov.net/viewConsult.php?ConsultationID=40992>.
- ²⁴² Law No. 03/L-122 on Foreign Service of the Republic of Kosovo, 2008.
- ²⁴³ For 18 ambassador positions, 275 men and 78 women applied (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2010).
- ²⁴⁴ Koha Net, "Gratë deputete: Diskriminim, asnjë grua ambasadore" ["Women deputies: Discrimination, not one woman ambassador"], 11 November 2011.
- ²⁴⁵ KWN interview with Vjosa Osmani, 2020.
- ²⁴⁶ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, *Women and Men in Kosovo 2018-2019*, 2020, at: <https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/5800/grat%C3%AB-dhe-burrat-n%C3%AB-kosov%C3%AB-2018-2019.pdf>; *Women and Men in Kosovo 2016-2017*, 2018, at: <https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/4582/women-and-man-2016-2017.pdf>; and KWN correspondence with Nagip Skenderi, General Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 18 October 2011.
- ²⁴⁷ Supreme Court, website, accessed in 2020, at: <https://supreme.gjyqesori-rks.org/miresevini-ne-gjykaten-supreme/judges/?lang=en>.
- ²⁴⁸ Lawyers' Association Norma, *Research and Monitoring the Implementation of the Law on Gender Equality*, Pristina: Norma, 2011.
- ²⁴⁹ KWN email correspondence with Fatmire Krasniqi, Kosovo Judicial Council, 2021, and Astrit Kolaj, Kosovo Prosecutorial Council, 2021.
- ²⁵⁰ KWN email correspondence with Fatmire Krasniqi, Kosovo Judicial Council, 2021.
- ²⁵¹ Ibid.
- ²⁵² Ibid.

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- ¹ KWN interview with Fahri Sadriu, 2007.
- ² UN Secretary-General, indicator 14.
- ³ UN Secretary-General, goal X.

⁴ Shifts in women's perceptions of security may indicate progress over time in the arena of protection, according to the UN Secretary-General. AGE and UNDP contracted KWN's research *Security Begins at Home*, but this only examined one aspect of women's and girls' security: domestic violence. KGSC developed a methodology in 2010 for assessing women's security using the UN Secretary-General's indicators (*Women Security Index 2010: Kosovo Report*, Pristina: KGSC, 2011). However, KGSC drew from panel discussions with experts rather than a Kosovo-wide representative survey of diverse women (as per the UN Secretary-General's indicator 14). Thus, women's and girls' perceptions of security disaggregated by particular ethnic, age, and other social groups; how this impacts their ability to participate in public life; and shifts in perceptions over time remain insufficiently assessed and addressed. In 2019, OSCE conducted the *Survey on Well-being of Women and Girls in Kosovo*, which can be used as a proxy indicator of the current situation in Kosovo. However, it does not align with the methodology required by the UN Secretary-General (at: <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/d/c/439781.pdf>).

⁵ Quoted in Human Rights Watch, "Serb Gang-Rapes in Kosovo Exposed", 20 March 2000, at: <http://www.hrw.org/news/2000/03/20/serb-gang-rapes-kosovo-exposed>. The Kosovo woman witnessed the rape of her 28-year-old sister-in-law and the murder of six members of her family by six armed and uniformed Serb men. The incident occurred two days before NATO entered Peja.

⁶ Rome Statute, Art. 7.1, g.

⁷ UN, International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, "Updated Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia", September 2009, Art. 5, at: http://www.icty.org/x/file/Legal%20Library/Statute/statute_sept09_en.pdf.

⁸ UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Art. 10. UNFPA defined gender-based violence as "any harm that is directed against a person on the basis of gender or sex, resulting from power imbalances that exploit [the] distinction between males and females, as also among males and females." Violence can be physical and/or

sexual, as well as psychological, economic, or socio-cultural ("Gender-Based Violence In Kosovo: A Case Study", UNFPA, January 2005).

⁹ D. Serrano Fitamant for UNFPA, "Assessment Report on Sexual Violence in Kosovo", Albania: 28 May 1999.

¹⁰ Human Rights Watch, "Serb Gang-Rapes in Kosovo Exposed", 2000.

¹¹ See Chris Corrin, "Post-conflict Situation in Kosovo" in *If Not Now, When?*, 2001, p. 93; Michelle Hynes and Barbara Lopes Cardozo, "Sexual Violence against Women in Refugee Settings", *Journal of Women's Health and Gender-based Medicine*, 9, no. 8, 2000, pp. 819-824; and Center for Protection of Women and Children, *Annual 2003*, p. 136.

¹² Human Rights Watch, "Serb Gang-Rapes in Kosovo Exposed."

¹³ Amnesty International, "*Wounds that burn our souls*": *Compensation for Kosovo's wartime rape survivors, but still no justice*, 2017, p. 7, at:

<https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/eur70/7558/2017/en/>.

¹⁴ UN Secretary General, indicator 25.

¹⁵ ICTY webpage, at: <https://www.icty.org/>.

¹⁶ ICTY, "Updated Statute", resolutions 808 and 827.

¹⁷ ICTY, Annual report 2017, p. 21, at:

https://www.icty.org/x/file/About/Reports%20and%20Publications/AnnualReports/annual_report_2017_en.pdf.

¹⁸ The office has the same mandate as other UN departmental focal points (KWN correspondence with ICTY, 18 October 2011), outlined in UN Secretariat, "Secretary-General's bulletin: Departmental focal points for women in the Secretariat", ST/SGB/2008/12, 1 August 2008.

¹⁹ See Julie Mertus, "When Adding Women Matters: Women's Participation in the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia", *Seton Hall Law Review*, Vol. 38:1297, 2008.

²⁰ ICTY, "Assessment and Report of Judge Carmel Agius, President of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, provided to the Security Council pursuant to paragraph 6 of Security Council resolution 1534 (2004)", 2017, p. 7, at:

<https://www.icty.org/x/file/About/Reports%20and%20Publications/CompletionStrategy/171129-completion-strategy-report-icty.pdf>.

²¹ ICTY Annual Report 2017, p. 10.

- ²² See UN, ICTY, website, "Former Prosecutors", at: <https://www.icty.org/en/about/office-of-the-prosecutor/former-prosecutors>.
- ²³ KWN correspondence with ICTY, 18 October 2011.
- ²⁴ ICTY website, "Outreach Programme".
- ²⁵ UN Secretary-General, indicator 25a.
- ²⁶ KWN correspondence with ICTY, 18 October 2011.
- ²⁷ ICTY, Case Information Sheet, "Vlastimir Đorđević", IT-05-87/1.
- ²⁸ ICTY, "Judgement Summary", The Hague, 23 February 2011, at: http://www.icty.org/x/cases/djordjevic/tjug/en/110223_summary.pdf.
- ²⁹ Pavković was convicted in 2009 of certain counts of sexual assault as persecution (ICTY, Prosecutor v Milutinovic et al. Case No. IT-05-87-T, 26 February 2009, vol. 3, [785], at: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/milutinovic/tjug/en/jud090226-e3of4.pdf>). In 2014, the Appeals Chamber reversed a finding that three additional counts of sexual assaults were not committed with discriminatory intent but refused to enter new convictions for these charges (ICTY, Prosecutor v Šainović et al. Case No. IT-05-87-A, 23 January 2014, at: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/milutinovic/acjug/en/140123.pdf>).
- ³⁰ ICTY, Prosecutor v Vlastimir Đorđević. Case No. IT-05-87/1-A. 27 January 2014, at: <https://www.icty.org/x/cases/djordjevic/acjug/en/140127.pdf>.
- ³¹ ICTY, Prosecutor v Milutinovic et al.
- ³² Judge Ramaroson dissented to the refusal to enter new convictions, stating that it had the consequence of leaving serious crimes of persecution in the form of sexual violence as a crime against humanity unpunished (ICTY, Prosecutor v Šainović et al., pp. 756-757 (in French only)).
- ³³ UN Secretary-General, indicator 25a.
- ³⁴ Amnesty International, "*Wounds that burn our souls*", p. 28.
- ³⁵ Ibid, pp. 7-28.
- ³⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁸ KWN email correspondence with BIRN, 2020.
- ³⁹ KWN interview with Sevdije Ahmeti, Pristina, 2011.
- ⁴⁰ ICTY, "Innovative Procedures", at: <http://www.icty.org/sid/10313>.
- ⁴¹ Ibid.
- ⁴² KWN interview with Veprora Shehu, Gjakova, 2011.

⁴³ KWN interview with Nora Ahmetaj, Director, Centre for Research, Documentation and Publication, Pristina, 2011.

⁴⁴ UNFPA, Kosovo/UN rape report, "UN Population Fund Reports Rape, Abduction among Kosovo Refugees", 26 March 2000.

⁴⁵ KWN correspondence with UNMIK official, 2011.

⁴⁶ UN Secretary-General, "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo", S/2009/149, 17 March 2009.

⁴⁷ EULEX, Joint Action 2008/124/CFSP on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo; Law No. 03/L-053 "On the Jurisdiction, Case Selection and Case Allocation of EULEX Judges and Prosecutors in Kosovo"; and Law No. 03/L-052 "On the Special Prosecution Office of the Republic of Kosovo".

⁴⁸ UN Secretary-General, "Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo", S/2009/497, 30 September 2009, Annex I, part 2, "Police".

⁴⁹ OSCE Mission in Kosovo, Department of Human Rights and Communities, "Kosovo's War Crime Trials: An Assessment Ten Years On 1999-2009", May 2010, at: <http://www.osce.org/kosovo/68569>.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Supreme Court of Kosovo, Ap-Kz-108/2010, 25 November 2010, http://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/docs/justice/judgments/criminal-proceedings/SupremeC/Idriz-Gashi-108-2010/%282010.11.25%29%20JUD%20Idriz%20GASHI%20%28SC%29.ENG_redacted.pdf.

⁵² KWN interview with Lina Andeer, Country Representative, Kvinna till Kvinna, Pristina, 2011.

⁵³ KWN interview with Sirpa Rautio, 2011.

⁵⁴ EULEX, comment on draft, 2020.

⁵⁵ KWN interview with Veprora Shehu, 2020.

⁵⁶ KWN email correspondence with BIRN, 2020.

⁵⁷ KWN interview with Veprora Shehu, 2020.

⁵⁸ Amnesty International, "*Wounds that burn our souls*", p. 7.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ In June 2014, the European Council amended the initial Joint Action 2008/124/CFSP on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo. It amended Article 18 on Release of classified information, handing over to local authorities the "EU classified information and documents up to the level 'RESTREINT UE/EU RESTRICTED'". The

initial joint action is here: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/en/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32008E0124>; and the amended joint action is here: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/GA/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32014D0349>.

⁶¹ Council Decision (CFSP) 2018/856 of 8 June 2018 amending Joint Action 2008/124/CFSP on the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo, 2018, at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dec/2018/856/oj>.

⁶² They were established after the Kosovo Assembly amended Article 162 of the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo and passed the Law on Specialist Chambers and Specialist Prosecutor's Office in Kosovo Assembly.

⁶³ Kosovo Specialist Chambers & Specialist Prosecutor's Office, website, at: <https://www.scp-ks.org/en>.

⁶⁴ KWN interview with Aida Dërguti, 2020.

⁶⁵ KWN interview with Veporre Shehu, 2020.

⁶⁶ UNSCR 2467, 23 April 2019; see also UNSCR 1325, 31 October 2000.

⁶⁷ KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, p. 52. This report also details other transitional justice initiatives.

⁶⁸ Kvinna till Kvinna, "Unforgettable testimonies at court for women survivors", 2015, at:

<http://vipa.kvinnatillkvinna.se/regioner/balkan/unforgettable-testimonies-at-court-for-women-survivors>.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, p. 52.

⁷¹ KWN interview with Shpresa Agushi, 2020.

⁷² KWN email correspondence with Vjosa Osmani, 2020.

⁷³ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2011.

⁷⁴ Law No. 02/L-2, 2006. See also, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, "Scope of the Department of Families of Martyrs, War Invalids, and Families of Civilian Victims (DFDIL)", Prihtina: 2010.

⁷⁵ KWN interview with Aida Dërguti, 2020.

⁷⁶ Law No. 04/L-172 on Amending and Supplementing the Law No. 04/L-054 on the Status and the Rights of the Martyrs, Invalids, Veterans, Members of Kosovo Liberation Army, Sexual Violence Victims of the War, Civilian Victims and their Families, 2014, at: <https://qzk.rks-qov.net/ActDetail.aspx?ActID=2793>.

⁷⁷ Ibid., Article 6.

⁷⁸ KWN interview with Vjosa Osmani, 2020.

- ⁷⁹ KWN interview with Feride Rushiti, 2020.
- ⁸⁰ KWN interview with Veprora Shehu, 2020.
- ⁸¹ KWN interview with Minire Begaj, 2020.
- ⁸² Law No. 04/L-172 on Amending and Supplementing the on the Status and the Rights of the Martyrs, Invalids, Veterans, Members of Kosovo Liberation Army, Sexual Violence Victims of the War, Civilian Victims and their Families.
- ⁸³ Comment on draft by Chiara Tagliani, EULEX, 2021.
- ⁸⁴ KWN interview with Minire Begaj, 2020.
- ⁸⁵ Amnesty International, "*Wounds that burn our souls*".
- ⁸⁶ For further information, see: EULEX website, "Executive Division", at: <https://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/?page=2,2>.
- ⁸⁷ Comment on draft by Lina Andeer, 2021.
- ⁸⁸ KWN interview with Feride Rushiti, 2020.
- ⁸⁹ UN News Centre Article, "Women Vital to Peace in Post-conflict Zones, Security Council Hears".
- ⁹⁰ KWN, Letter to UNMIK Special Representative to the Secretary General, "Incident in Krusha e Vogel village, Kosovo on 25 May 2006", 26 May 2006.
- ⁹¹ Ibid.
- ⁹² UNMIK, Press Release, "SRSG announces findings of initial investigation into events at Krushe e Vogel/Mala Krusa on 25 May 2006", UNMIK/PR/1561, 7 June 2006.
- ⁹³ UNMIK, Press Release, "UN Secretary-General appoints Stephen Curtis as UNMIK Police Commissioner", UNMIK/PR/1582, 15 September 2006.
- ⁹⁴ UN Secretary-General, indicators 6 and 7.
- ⁹⁵ UN Security Council, "Cross-Cutting Report No. 2 Women Peace and Security", for 1 October 2010.
- ⁹⁶ For example, the fact that UNMIK "created a special unit to ensure that victims receive help when they seek justice" was mentioned by the UN Secretary-General during his "Remarks to the Security Council Meeting On Women, Peace and Security", New York, 19 June 2008.
- ⁹⁷ UN Secretary-General, indicator 6.
- ⁹⁸ UN Secretary-General, indicator 5a.
- ⁹⁹ KWN interview with Tilly Stroosnijder.
- ¹⁰⁰ UN Secretary-General, indicator 5a.
- ¹⁰¹ KWN interview with Javiera Thais Santa Cruz, 2020.

- ¹⁰² KWN correspondence with Elisabeth Schleicher, 2011.
- ¹⁰³ KWN interview with Sirpa Rautio.
- ¹⁰⁴ KWN correspondence with EULEX, 7 October 2011.
- ¹⁰⁵ KWN interview with Chiara Tagliani, 2020.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁹ KWN, *Kosovo Gender Analysis*, 2018, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/womens-network.pdf>.
- ¹¹⁰ European Commission, "Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: Transforming the Lives of Girls and Women through EU External Relations 2016-2020"; and European Commission, "EU Gender Action Plan (GAP) III – An Ambitious Agenda for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action", 2020.
- ¹¹¹ UN Secretary-General, goal IV.
- ¹¹² UNDP, Website, "Public Pulse: Project Summary", at: <https://www.ks.undp.org/content/kosovo/en/home/projects/public-pulse0.html>.
- ¹¹³ KWN interview with UNDP representatives, 2020.
- ¹¹⁴ UN Secretary-General, goal IV and indicator 5a.
- ¹¹⁵ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2011.
- ¹¹⁶ UN Secretary-General, goal II.
- ¹¹⁷ UN Secretary-General, indicator 2.
- ¹¹⁸ KWN focused on UNMIK reports to the UN Security Council, as the organisation responsible for reporting. UNMIK reports generally included information from the OSCE and cited information from other relevant actors, such as EULEX in later years.
- ¹¹⁹ UNMIK Report to the Secretary-General, 20 November 2006, p. 10.
- ¹²⁰ UNMIK Report to the Secretary-General, 26 June 2003, p. 5.
- ¹²¹ UN Secretary-General, indicator 2.
- ¹²² KWN interview with Tilly Stroosnijder, 2011.
- ¹²³ KWN interviews with five women's rights activists, 2011.
- ¹²⁴ KWN interview with Luljeta Vuniqi, 2011.
- ¹²⁵ UNMIK Report to the Secretary-General, 12 August 2011, p. 11.
- ¹²⁶ KWN interview with Javiera Thais Santa Cruz.
- ¹²⁷ UN Secretary-General, indicator 3a.
- ¹²⁸ As per UN Secretary-General, indicator 3a.

- ¹²⁹ The Security and Gender Coordination Group (SGCG) is an informal group that seeks to coordinate efforts related to gender equality in Kosovo, involving UN agencies, Kosovo institutions, women's organisations, NATO, OSCE, EUSR and EULEX.
- ¹³⁰ OHCHR, "High Commissioner's Strategic Management Plan 2010-2011", at: <http://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Press/SMP2010-2011.pdf>.
- ¹³¹ KWN interview with Arbena Kuriu, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹³² OHCHR, *Civil Society Report on Human Rights in Kosovo 2019, 2020*, at: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Press/kosovo_cs0_2019_human_rights_report_en.pdf.
- ¹³³ KWN interview with EULEX representatives, Pristina, 2011.
- ¹³⁴ Head of Mission, Speech at Open Day, "10 Years UNSCR 1325", 3 November 2010.
- ¹³⁵ EULEX, "Annual Report 2010 on the Judicial Activities of EULEX", 2010.
- ¹³⁶ KWN correspondence with EULEX, 7 October 2011.
- ¹³⁷ KWN interview with Chiara Tagliani, 2020.
- ¹³⁸ European Council, "Stabilisation and Association Agreement (SAA) between the European Union and Kosovo signed", 2015, at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2015/10/27/kosovo-eu-stabilisation-association-agreement/>.
- ¹³⁹ Law on Gender Equality, Art. 6, according to Luljeta Domaniku, Legal Councillor for Gender Equality of the Ombudsperson Institution (KWN interview, Pristina, 2011).
- ¹⁴⁰ KWN interview with Luljeta Domaniku, 2011.
- ¹⁴¹ Of the cases, women registered 23.4 percent (942 by men and 288 by women), and 26.1 percent of the cases investigated were filed by women (306 by men and 108 by women).
- ¹⁴² Ombudsperson Institution, Website, "Annual Reports", at: <https://www.oik-rks.org/en/reports/annual-reports/>.
- ¹⁴³ Office of Prime Minister, Office of Good Governance, Human Rights, Equal Opportunities, and Gender, "Report on the Implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan on Human Rights in the Republic of Kosovo (2009-2011)", Pristina: Office of Good Governance, 2011.

¹⁴⁴ KWN interview with Habit Hajredini, Director, Office of Good Governance, Equal Opportunities, and Gender Issues, Office of the Prime Minister of Kosovo, Pristina, 2011.

¹⁴⁵ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2007.

¹⁴⁶ UN Secretary-General, indicators 3a, 4, and 5a.

¹⁴⁷ Amnesty International, *Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro) "So does it mean that we have the rights?" Protecting the human rights of women and girls trafficked for forced prostitution in Kosovo*, EUR 70/010/2004, 5 May 2004.

¹⁴⁸ KWN interview with Behar Selimi, 2011.

¹⁴⁹ Amnesty International, 2004, and UN Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development, Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UN Secretariat, New York, 6-8 July 2005. While use of prostitution services and trafficking expanded largely due to international forces in Kosovo, the local Kosovar clientele seems to have grown with time (UNMIK, "HIV/AIDS Awareness Campaign in Kosovo", UN Nations TV, Programme No. 877, 3 November 2003).

¹⁵⁰ KWN interview with Tijana Simić LaValley, 2020.

¹⁵¹ BBC News, "Kosovo UN Troops 'Fuel Sex Trade'", 6 May 2004, at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/3686173.stm>. For other examples, see Amnesty International, 2004.

¹⁵² UN Secretary-General, indicator 4. The Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/2003/13 defines sexual exploitation as any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. "Sexual abuse" is defined as the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

¹⁵³ UNMIK Regulation No. 2001/4 On the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons in Kosovo, 2001.

¹⁵⁴ Republic of Kosovo, Government, Ministry of Internal Affairs, "National Strategy and Action Plan against Trafficking in Human Beings 2011-2014", 2011.

¹⁵⁵ The Criminal Code of Kosovo defines "trafficking" and penalties (Art. 139); the Kosovo Law on Public Peace and Order refers to forced prostitution as a minor offence, punishable by up to two months (Article 18(8)); and the UNMIK Regulation on the Prohibition

of Trafficking in Persons of Kosovo outlined penalties ranging from two to 20 years imprisonment. Other applicable legislation is outlined in the "National Strategy".

¹⁵⁶ Warsaw, 16.V.2005.

¹⁵⁷ Article 165.

¹⁵⁸ UNMIK Regulation No. 2001/4 On the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons in Kosovo.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ UN Secretary-General, indicator 15 calls for such training.

¹⁶¹ "National Strategy", pp. 8-10.

¹⁶² UN Secretary-General, indicator 4 calls for monitoring the extent to which preventative efforts have their desired effect.

¹⁶³ KWN interview with Arbena Kuriu, 2011.

¹⁶⁴ KWN interview, 2011.

¹⁶⁵ KWN interview with a former OSCE employee, 2011.

¹⁶⁶ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2007.

¹⁶⁷ KWN interview with EULEX representatives, 2011.

¹⁶⁸ KWN interview with Chiara Tagliani, 2020.

¹⁶⁹ Cited in Amnesty International, 2004.

¹⁷⁰ UNMIK, "Combating Human Trafficking in Kosovo: Strategy and Commitment", UNMIK, May 2004.

¹⁷¹ BBC News, "Kosovo UN Troops 'Fuel Sex Trade'", 6 May 2004.

¹⁷² KWN interview with Jean Wakam, Head, Conduct & Discipline Team, UNMIK, 2011.

¹⁷³ KWN interview with Javiera Thais Santa Cruz, 2020.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

¹⁷⁵ UN Secretary-General, indicator 4.

¹⁷⁶ Agence France-Presse, "Kosovo: UN employee indicted on sexual harassment, human trafficking charges", 26 May 2005.

¹⁷⁷ As per UN Secretary-General, indicator 4.

¹⁷⁸ Diplomatic immunity as defined by the UN Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations of 1961, Article 29, p. 9.

¹⁷⁹ UNMIK/REG/2000/47 on the Status, Privileges and Immunities of KFOR and UNMIK and Their Personnel in Kosovo, 2000.

¹⁸⁰ KWN interview, 2011.

¹⁸¹ The UN Secretary-General charges DPKO with responsibilities related to indicator 4.

¹⁸² The resolution that authorised a study was E/CN.4/SUB.2/DEC/2001/105, and the progress report on the study: E/CN.4/Sub.2/2002/6.

¹⁸³ IOL News, "UN official held over alleged child abuse," 3 February 2005, at: <http://www.iol.co.za/news/world/un-official-held-over-alleged-child-abuse-1.233105>; and *Daily News*, "Pakistani sentenced for molesting minor in Kosovo," 2 November 2005.

¹⁸⁴ Steven Erlanger, "The Ugliest American", *New York Times Magazine*, 2 April 2000, at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2000/04/02/magazine/the-ugliest-american.html?src=pm>.

¹⁸⁵ Save the Children, "Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Children by Aid Workers and Peacekeepers", Policy Brief, December 2009.

¹⁸⁶ Roger Cohen, "U.S. Sergeant Gets Life in Murder of Kosovo Girl, 11", *The New York Times*, 2 August 2000. For further details, see Erlanger, "The Ugliest American", 2000.

¹⁸⁷ EULEX Head of Mission, "Speech at Open Day: 10 Years UNSCR 1325", 3 November 2010; EULEX policy to assist Kosovo institutions in combatting trafficking; public events dealing with human trafficking; and monitoring of trafficking cases (KWN correspondence with EULEX, 7 October 2011).

¹⁸⁸ KWN requested quantitative information from EULEX regarding all cases, but it was not provided. While updated data was requested in 2020, it was not provided; perhaps there were no additional cases.

¹⁸⁹ EULEX Kosovo, Court Judgments, Criminal Proceedings, Supreme Court of Kosovo, Ap.-Kz No. 106/2007, PnIKr 165/2009, at: <http://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/docs/justice/judgments/criminal-proceedings/SupremeC/SC%20Judgment%20-%20Vladimir%20Ukaj%20et%20alia%20-%20E.pdf>.

¹⁹⁰ KWN interview with Sakibe Doli, Director, Safe House, 2007.

¹⁹¹ KWN correspondence with Sakibe Doli, 2011.

¹⁹² KWN, *Security Begins at Home*, Pristina: KWN, 2008; European Commission, "Kosovo under UNSCR 1244/99 2009 Progress Report", 14 October 2009; Freedom House, "Map of Freedom in the World", Kosovo: Freedom House, 2010; UNHCR, "UNCHR's Eligibility Guidelines for Assessing the International Protection Needs of Individuals from Kosovo", 9 November 2009, p. 20; OSCE, *Survey on well-being and safety of women in Kosovo, 2019*.

¹⁹³ KWN correspondence with Kosovo Police, 2011, 2021.

- ¹⁹⁴ KWN, *Security Begins at Home*, p. 48; and KWN, *No More Excuses: An Analysis of Attitudes, Incidence and Institutional Responses to Domestic Violence in Kosovo*, Pristina: KWN, 2015, p. 45, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/20151124105025622.pdf>.
- ¹⁹⁵ KWN interview with Tahire Haxholli, 2011.
- ¹⁹⁶ KWN, *No More Excuses*, p. 36.
- ¹⁹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁸ KWN interview with Hysni Shala, 2020.
- ¹⁹⁹ KWN correspondence with Kosovo Police, 2011 and 2022.
- ²⁰⁰ KWN, *Security Begins at Home*, 2008. Data regarding which ethnic groups, ages, or persons from particular regions tended to suffer domestic violence more was inconclusive.
- ²⁰¹ Ibid. By 2015, this had decreased to 67.1 percent (KWN, *No More Excuses*).
- ²⁰² KWN, *No More Excuses*.
- ²⁰³ OSCE, *Survey on well-being and safety of women in Kosovo*, 2019.
- ²⁰⁴ KWN, *No More Excuses*, 2015.
- ²⁰⁵ OSCE, *Survey on well-being and safety of women in Kosovo*, 2019.
- ²⁰⁶ Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo, Law No. 03/L-182, Art. 182. It entered into force on 1 July 2010 and replaced UNMIK Regulation No. 2003/12 on Protection against Domestic Violence.
- ²⁰⁷ UNMIK/REG/2003/25, Provisional Criminal Code of Kosovo, which in 2008 was approved by the Assembly of the Republic of Kosovo as the official Criminal Code of Kosovo. See Law No. 03/L-002.
- ²⁰⁸ KWN interview with Tahire Haxholli, 2020.
- ²⁰⁹ See KWN, *From Laws to Action: Monitoring the Institutional Response to Gender-Based Violence in Kosovo*, 2021, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/publications/from-laws-to-action-2/>.
- ²¹⁰ UN Secretary-General, indicator 15.
- ²¹¹ See KWN, *From Laws to Action*, 2021.
- ²¹² Between 2006 and 2010, the Kosovo Police recorded 591 protection orders granted by courts and 109 by police (correspondence with KWN, 2011).
- ²¹³ KWN interview with Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, 2011.
- ²¹⁴ UN Secretary-General, indicator 20. Calculating the hours of training decision-making personnel in security and justice sector

institutions receive proved challenging as few institutions in Kosovo had institutionalised such training, but rather offered *ad hoc* training. It is interesting that the UN Secretary-General only calls for decision-making personnel to undergo gender training as they typically do not interact with women directly. While the argument could be made that they should pass their knowledge on to other staff, it seems like training would have more impact if provided to persons interacting with women directly.

²¹⁵ KWN interview with Enver Peci, Pristina, 2011.

²¹⁶ KWN interviews with Behar Selimi and Tahire Haxholli.

²¹⁷ KWN interview with Hysni Shala, 2007.

²¹⁸ KWN interview with Behar Selimi, 2007.

²¹⁹ KWN interview with Osnat Lubrani, 2011.

²²⁰ For example, see Clark, Howard, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*. London: Pluto Press, 2000.

²²¹ Anna Di Lellio for UNDP, *Community Safety*, Pristina: UNDP, 2009, p. 16. A 2003 assessment estimated that around 330,000 to 460,000 civilians had guns in Kosovo, most held illicitly (Anna Khakee and Nicolas Florquin, *Kosovo and the Gun: A Baseline Assessment of Small Arms and Light Weapons in Kosovo*, Special Report, Geneva: UNDP and Small Arms Survey, 2003).

²²² Kosovo police registered 36 cases of armed threats in a domestic relationship between 2006 and 2010 (correspondence with KWN).

²²³ Ibid.

²²⁴ UN Secretary-General, indicator 17.

²²⁵ UN Department for Disarmament Affairs, "Coordinating Action on Small Arms: The United Nations Policy", 1998. Towards prevention, the Law on Weapons requires a permit, acquired through medical and knowledge-based exams, for those interested in legally owning a weapon for hunting, target shooting, and collection (Republic of Kosovo, Law No. 03/L-143).

²²⁶ They have conducted research for internal purposes, but it relied on UNDP's somewhat outdated information.

²²⁷ KWN interview with Marta Gazideda, 2020.

²²⁸ Ibid.

²²⁹ UNDP, *Kosovo Small Arms and Light Weapons Survey, 2012-2016*, Belgrade: SEESAC, 2019, at:

https://www.seesac.org/f/docs/SALW-Surveys/web_Kosovo_SALW-Survey_ENG.pdf.

²³⁰ Ibid.

²³¹ KWN interview with Edi Gusia, 2020

²³² KWN interview with Tahire Haxholli, 2011.

²³³ UN Secretary-General, indicator 1b. While the indicator refers to sexual violence, the goal calls for attention to gender-based violence more broadly.

²³⁴ Story based on media, including *Bota Sot*, "Rrëfim Ekzkluziv i Gëzim Kastratit, baba i Dianës, e vrarë nga bashkëshorti i saj" ["Story told exclusively by Gezim Kastrati, Diana's father, who was murdered by her husband"], 19 May 2011.

²³⁵ UN Secretary-General, indicator 19.

²³⁶ For details, see KWN, *More than "Words on Paper?" The response of justice providers to domestic violence in Kosovo*, Pristina: KWN, 2009; KWN, *No More Excuses*, 2015; and KWN, *From Laws to Action*, 2021.

²³⁷ Story based on KWN interviews with judges, in KWN, *More than "Words on Paper?"*

²³⁸ KWN interview with Sevdije Ahmeti, 2011.

²³⁹ KWN interview with Tahire Haxholli, 2011.

²⁴⁰ Law No. 2004/32 Family Law of Kosovo, Article 140.1. Divorce is handled through a decision of the court, with the agreement of one or both spouses. Divorce may not be filed for during a spouse's pregnancy or until the joint child is one year old (articles 68 and 70).

²⁴¹ Ibid, Art. 140.2. Each year the parent who was given custody must produce a work report consisting of all of his/her work for the past year and his/her care for the person under custody relating to health, education, and other important matters (Art. 252).

²⁴² KWN, *More than "Words on Paper?"*

²⁴³ KWN interview with Luljeta Vunijqi, 2011.

²⁴⁴ KWN interview with Tahire Haxholli, 2020

²⁴⁵ KWN interview with Lina Andeer, 2011. See also, KWN, *From Laws to Action*, 2021.²⁴⁶ UN Secretary-General, indicator 19.

²⁴⁷ The other cases involving women victims were the trafficking and war crimes cases mentioned earlier.

²⁴⁸ EULEX Kosovo, Court Judgments, Criminal Proceedings, Supreme Court of Kosovo, Ap.-Kz No. 128/2010.

²⁴⁹ KWN interview with Sirpa Rautio, 2011.

²⁵⁰ EULEX Kosovo, Court Judgments, Civil Proceedings, at:

<http://www.eulex-kosovo.eu/en/judgments/CV-Supreme-Court.php>.

- ²⁵¹ KWN, *More than "Words on Paper?"*
- ²⁵² Ibid and KWN, *From Laws to Action*, 2021.
- ²⁵³ Story based on interview with Luciano Calestini, Pristina, 2011.
- ²⁵⁴ The legal age to marry in Kosovo is 18, except in cases where spouses have demonstrated a certain level of responsibility to marry at age 16. Arranged marriages, albeit rare, still take place in Kosovo, particularly in rural areas. According to the Kosovo Family Law "marriage shall not be valid when the will has been obtained under coercion, threat or by mistake or any other lack of free will of the future spouses" (Art. 18). Factual or out of wedlock relationships, where a couple live together and share responsibilities, financial support, and property rights, are given marital status with rights and obligations.
- ²⁵⁵ KWN interview with Osnat Lubrani.
- ²⁵⁶ As per UN Secretary-General, indicator 15.
- ²⁵⁷ KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, 2021.
- ²⁵⁸ Beyond notions of military or state security, human security places people at the centre, focusing on their basic needs. It refers to social, economic, political, environmental and cultural wellbeing, as well as the protection of human rights.
- ²⁵⁹ KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, 2021.
- ²⁶⁰ Ibid.
- ²⁶¹ Ibid.
- ²⁶² KWN interview with Shpresa Agushi, 2011.
- ²⁶³ Matt Prodger for BBC, "Toxic Camp angers Kosovo Roma", 13 June 2005, at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4080048.stm>.
- ²⁶⁴ KWN interview with Frode Mouring, UNDP, Pristina, 2007.
- ²⁶⁵ Jasna Causevic and Stefan Liebing (ed) for Society for Threatened People, "Highest Level of Lead in Samples of Human Hair, Under the eyes of UNMIK: 560 Roma refugees exposed to deadly heavy metals since 1999", December 2005, p. 9.
- ²⁶⁶ Ibid.
- ²⁶⁷ Human Rights Watch, "Lead-Contaminated Roma Camps in Kosovo Shut Down", 9 December 2010, at: <http://www.hrw.org/news/2010/11/24/lead-contaminated-roma-camps-kosovo-shut-down>.
- ²⁶⁸ Immediately after the war, women established the Kosovo Women's Network to bring women's homogenised or hushed voices to the forefront of post-conflict decision-making. Dr. Skender Sylja of

WHO commented, "The Kosovo Women's Network has had a very active role in addressing the needs of women in remote areas of Kosovo, groups which very often have been marginalised. They have united, voiced their opinion, and made themselves heard" (KWN interview, 2011).

²⁶⁹ KWN interview with Shpresa Agushi, 2007.

²⁷⁰ UNDP, *Human Development Report for Kosovo: The Rise of the Citizen: Challenges and Choices*, 2004, p. 119.

²⁷¹ KWN, *Security Begins at Home*, 2008 and discussions with women, particularly in rural areas.

²⁷² KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, 2021.

²⁷³ Ibid.

²⁷⁴ Kosovar Stability Initiative (IKS), Policy Paper, "En Route to the EU: Area-Based Development Opportunities", Pristina: IKS, 2011.

²⁷⁵ KWN, *A Seat at the Table*, 2021.

²⁷⁶ Council of Europe, *Intersectional Gender Analysis of Pre-University Education*, 2020, p. 23, at: <https://rm.coe.int/raporti-gender-eng-final/1680a0b187>.

²⁷⁷ UN Secretary General, indicator 21b.

²⁷⁸ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, *Education Statistics in Kosovo 2019/2020*, 2020, at: <https://ask.rks-qov.net/media/5637/education-201902020-ang.pdf>.

²⁷⁹ Marta Prenkpalaj, cited by KGSC in *History is Herstory, too*.

²⁸⁰ Howard Clark, *Civil Resistance in Kosovo*, p. 75; and Centre for Protection of Women and Children (CPWC), *Social Map on Women in Kosovo: 1995-2000, Sociological Interpretation*, Pristina: CPWC, 2004, p. 20.

²⁸¹ UNICEF, UNFPA, and WHO, "Improving Health of Women and Children of Kosovo", Kosovo: 2007-2010, p. 8.

²⁸² Fitamant, "Assessment Report on Sexual Violence in Kosovo".

²⁸³ Fitamant, 1999.

²⁸⁴ KWN, *Exploratory Research on the Extent of Gender-Based Violence in Kosova and Its Impact on Women's Reproductive Health*, Pristina: KWN, 2008, p. 14.

²⁸⁵ UN Secretary-General, Goal XV.

²⁸⁶ Balkan Investigative Reporting Network (BIRN), "Report on Kosovo's Healthcare System", Pristina: BIRN, 2009. Reasons included low quality services, corrupt medical staff, and the lack of adequate pharmacies.

²⁸⁷ Kosovo Health Law, No. 2004/4. Special groups are defined as: children and adolescents up to 15 years of age; pupils and students; citizens over 65 years of age; citizens who are close family members of martyrs, war invalids, and other invalids, their close family members, as well as beneficiaries of social assistance and close members of their families; and persons with disabilities.

²⁸⁸ KWN interview with Visare Gorani Gashi, National Program Officer for Human Rights, Democracy and Rule of Law, Embassy of Sweden, Pristina, 2011.

²⁸⁹ UN Secretary General, indicator 21.

²⁹⁰ According to UNICEF, there were twelve reported cases of maternal mortality in 2009, "equated to a rate of 43.3 per 100,000 that year" (*Analysis on the Situation of Children and Women in Kosovo*, Pristina: UNICEF, 2017, at:

https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/media/211/file/Raporti_unicef_ENG.pdf). Meanwhile, another source reported maternal mortality in 2009 at seven deaths per 1,000 live births (Raka, L., *National Background Report on Health Research for Kosovo (under Resolution 1244)*, 2020).

²⁹¹ UNICEF, "Germany at a Glance", 2 March 2010.

²⁹² UNFPA Kosovo (under Resolution 1244), *Programme Evaluation Report, 2013-2018*, 2019.

²⁹³ Ministry of Health, "Strategic Plan of the Health of Mother, the Health of Children and Reproductive Health 2019-2021".

²⁹⁴ Gjocaj, Shqipe, "Maternal Deaths lost in the System", *Pristina Insight*, 2020, at: <https://prishtinainsight.com/maternal-deaths-lost-in-the-system-mag-2/>.

²⁹⁵ KWN interviews with Tijana Simić and Luljeta Demolli, 2020.

²⁹⁶ For data quality purposes, the Kosovo Agency of Statistics compared infant deaths registered in administrative data (335) with the 2011 Census data (329) for the period of 2005-2010 ("Estimation of Kosovo Population 2011", 2013, p. 29, at: <https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/2129/estimation-of-kosovo-population-2011.pdf>).

²⁹⁷ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, *Causes of Death in Kosovo, 2012 and 2013*, Pristina: 2015, at: <https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/1797/causes-of-death-in-kosovo-2012-2013.pdf>.

²⁹⁸ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, "Death Statistics 2020", 2021, p. 27, at: <https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/6641/death-statistics-2020.pdf>.

²⁹⁹ KWN correspondence with Doina Bologna, UNFPA, 2011.

- 300 KWN interview with Skender Sylja.
- 301 KWN interview with Magbule Elezi, 2020.
- 302 Ibid.
- 303 KWN, *Access to Healthcare in Kosovo*, Pristina: KWN, 2016.
- 304 Ibid.
- 305 Lul Raka, *National Background Report on Health Research for Kosovo (under UNSCR 1244)*, Pristina: 2009, p. 10.
- 306 Statistical Office of Kosovo, "Rate of Unemployment", 2008. See also, KWN, *Access to Healthcare in Kosovo*, 2016. Kosovo Agency of Statistics, "Labour Force Survey Q3 2020".
- 307 KWN, *Access to Healthcare in Kosovo*, 2016. Interviews also corroborated this in 2020.
- 308 KWN interview with Luljeta Demolli, 2020.
- 309 KWN, *Access to Healthcare in Kosovo*, 2016.
- 310 KWN interview with Tijana Simić LaValley, 2020.
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- 315 KWN, *Access to Healthcare in Kosovo*.
- 316 All stories from KWN, *Exploratory Research*, p. 30.
- 317 KWN interview with Vepore Shehu, 2011.
- 318 KWN interview with Elvanda Gojani, Coalition K10, 2020.
- 319 KWN observations, including during working group meetings on the labour law, where officials used this as an argument in favour of allocating state funds for women to stay home and have children.
- 320 KWN, Kosovo Women's Initiative and the UN Country Team in Kosovo, *Voice of Women*, Pristina: 2004; and KWN, *Access to Healthcare in Kosovo*.
- 321 KWN interview with Doina Bologa, 2011.
- 322 KWN interview with Sebahate Pacolli, 2011.
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- 325 KWN interview with Visare Mujko-Nimani, 2011.
- 326 KWN interview with Dr. Skender Sylja.
- 327 KWN interview with Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, 2007.

- ³²⁸ SOK, *Kosovo Labor Force Survey*, Pristina: SOK, 2009.
- ³²⁹ Kosovo Agency of Statistics, *Labour Force Survey Q3 2020*, 2020, at: <https://ask.rks-qov.net/media/5859/lfs-q3-2020.pdf>.
- ³³⁰ KWN interview with Valbona Salihu.
- ³³¹ Most states across Europe have strict laws, like “forced heirship” in France, that ensure equal division of property among children and family members; these place a certain emphasis on property remaining in the bloodline. The “equality in inheritance” section of the Kosovo Law refers to children born in and out of wedlock, as well as adopted children, as equal without mention of gender.
- ³³² As per UN Secretary-General, indicator 15.
- ³³³ Lawyers’ Association Norma, *Research and Monitoring the Implementation of the Law on Gender Equality*.
- ³³⁴ According to Norma’s research, in 2008, of the 4,452 heirs to claim their right to inheritance only 1,041 were women. In 2009, there were 1,003 women heirs versus 3,194 men.
- ³³⁵ Xhafaj, J., Nrecaj, A., *Të drejtat pronësore dhe trashëgimore të grave* [The right to property and inheritance for women], Pristina: CLARD, 2017, at: <https://advocacy-center.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Te-drejtat-pronesore-dhe-trashegimore-te-grave.pdf>
- ³³⁶ KWN review of court proceedings (EULEX, “Court Judgements, Civil Proceedings”). While EULEX has organised discussions around this issue (EULEX, “Time for Kosovo women to inherit property!” 10 March 2011), they do not seem to have monitored the implementation of laws related to women’s equal access to property within the courtroom as this was outside their mandate.
- ³³⁷ KWN interview with Vjosa Osmani, 2020.
- ³³⁸ OSCE and the Ministry for Labour and Social Welfare (MLSW), “Responding to Incidents of Domestic Violence: Manual for Social Services Officers,” Pristina: January 2006, p. 14. Nearly 15 percent of respondents to a KWN Kosovo-wide survey reported experiencing economic violence (*Security Begins at Home*, p. 35).
- ³³⁹ KWN, *Security Begins at Home*, p. 35.
- ³⁴⁰ UN Secretary-General, indicator 18.
- ³⁴¹ KWN, *Where’s the Money for Women’s Rights*, Pristina: The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation, 2020, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/publications/wheres-the-money-for-womens-rights/>.

³⁴² UN Secretary-General, indicators 22 (a), 22 (b), 23 (a), 23 (b), 24 (a), and 24 (b).

³⁴³ KWN interview with Jocelyne Talbot, 2011.

³⁴⁴ For example, in 2010, a UNDP gender audit showed that 35.5 percent of projects did not have any outputs that were “expected to contribute noticeably to gender equality” (a “0” score). In 2011 only one project in its closeout phase had this score. Further, where in 2010 only two of 31 projects (6.5 percent) ensured that gender equality was a principal objective (the highest score of “3”), six of 23 projects (26 percent) did in 2011. In 2009, UNDP estimated that roughly 15 percent of its program budget was allocated to gender and women’s empowerment, concentrated in a few projects.

³⁴⁵ KWN interview with UNDP representatives, 2020.

³⁴⁶ UNDP, “Gender Equality Strategy 2018-2021”, p. 19.

³⁴⁷ UN Sustainable Development Goals now also include establishing gender-responsive budgeting (indicator 5.c.1.).

³⁴⁸ KWN interview with Nazlie Bala, 2011.

³⁴⁹ UN Secretary-General, indicator 18.

³⁵⁰ For example, the UN Kosovo Team (UNKT) offered vocational training in subjects such as entrepreneurship, marketing, business environment, project management, business finance, and business plan writing (KWN interview with Jocelyne Talbot).

³⁵¹ EU, “Beautiful Kosovo Programme: Guidelines for Municipalities and Selection Criteria”.

³⁵² UNDP, *Price of Peace: Financing for gender equality in post-conflict reconstruction*, New York: UNDP, 2010. p. 14, at:

<https://www.undp.org/publications/price-peace-financing-gender-equality-post-conflict-reconstruction>.

³⁵³ KWN interview with Igballe Rogova, 2020.

³⁵⁴ For a full history, see KGSC, *History is Herstory too*.

³⁵⁵ KWN interview with Sevdije Ahmeti.

³⁵⁶ Jock Baker and Hilde Haug, *Final Report: External Evaluation of the Kosovo Women’s Initiative*, Geneva: UNHCR Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit, 2002, p. 32.

³⁵⁷ KGSC, *History is Herstory too*.

³⁵⁸ UNDP, *Price of Peace*.

³⁵⁹ KWN interview with Ariana Qosaj Mustafa, 2011.

³⁶⁰ UN Secretary-General, indicator 23a.

³⁶¹ KWN interview with Flora Macula, 2011.

³⁶² KWN and Alterhabitus, *Where's the Money for Women's Rights? A Kosovo Case Study*, Pristina: KWN, 2013, p. 41, at: <https://womensnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/20140617134906241.pdf>; and KWN, *Where's the Money for Women's Rights?*, p. 73.

³⁶³ *Ibid*, p. 61.

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