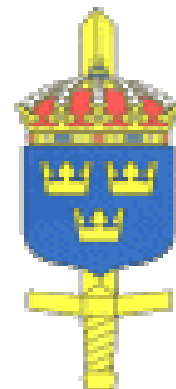




**Lt General Claes-Göran Fant Swedish Armed Forces**

**Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming in Swedish  
Armed Forces**

**Graz 10 May 2007**



Chairperson, Your Excellencies, Gentlemen and Ladies, , on Swedish Armed Forces behalf, I am honoured to be a part of this important Peer Review on Gender Mainstreaming. Thank you for this invitation.

Let me start with a historical example: In the beginning of the last century an aggressive and loud debate arose regarding women being given the possibility to work in the Governmental sector. The argument was that the wrists of women were too weak to write through several layers of carbon paper.....

We can agree that this will not be one of the easiest tasks we've handled, we are in the beginning of the process and we have to struggle against history, traditions, culture, social structures etc. But even in that context it is possible to make a change in the right direction and that is what I will talk to you about today.

In most areas of society when everyone agree on a task it is quite easy to reach results but when it comes to gender issues, even if everyone agrees on them and that we have to reach Gender Equality, it is difficult. You have to analyze the obstacles and handle them. One such "obstacle" is the lack of knowledge and understanding.

It is now time to go from words to action and work on the IMPLEMENTATION and integration of Gender Equality

Women are actors who must participate in all stages of peace efforts, including prevention of armed conflicts. They must be included to define the problems, define the need for protection, make analyzes, present proposals and solutions, and to negotiate and carry out decisions. This is stated very clearly in UNSCR 1325 "Women, Peace and Security" which the Swedish Armed Forces works hard to implement.

Today, the Swedish Armed Forces own experts perform 1325 training prior to deployment this is a strategic decision and helps the implementation process. If you systematically take in external experts on "gender, IDP, discrimination etc" the signal to the system is clear, something that will negatively affect the integration of these issues into the ordinary work. Mainstreaming Gender is about making the employees and commanders aware and responsible for gender issues. Gender Advisors and Gender Experts should Support, Facilitate and Monitor that process.

Every soldier and officer, going on an Operation/mission has at least three hours of training on 1325 and gender, and since two years gender training has been included in all military schools from the beginning to the top. That means that in every step in the military education system from the military academies to the higher staff courses there is clear gender training/education.

In 2006 Swedish Armed Forces contributed to EUFOR RD CONGO with a Gender Advisor to the Operational Commander. The objective was to make Gender Mainstreaming in real life and make 1325 Operational. This task was very successful!

At first the work was internal, making the participants in the Operation perform their daily work and tasks in a gendered way. To find a way to mainstream gender into their daily work.

EUFOR RD CONGO was the first, European Union, Military Operation ever taking Gender Issues and Implementation of UNSCR 1325/2000 into account in a structured and organized way. The work was well received both inside as well as outside the Operation, especially after the training sessions which gave the participants of the Operation a possibility to understand why this work was being brought into a Military Operation. The focus of the Gender work was at first operational!

Working with a Gender perspective contributed to the achievement of the overall objective of the operation. The acceptance of EUFOR was improved and the gender work also contributed to the effectiveness and success of the Operation.

One example of this was information and intelligence brought to the Operation via the work on Gender. Another example is that local women and women's NGOs were very positive to the fact that the EUFOR took its time to inform local women separately. They were also given the opportunity to express their point of view on the situation in DRC. This was considered to be a first good step in empowering local women as stated in UNSCR 1325/2000. Working this way also improved the credibility of the operation at the same time that it increased the visibility towards the local female population.

The integration of Gender was systematically addressed in all phases of Operation EUFOR RD CONGO.

#### Mission success stories

After the Gender training the Commander of the Airborne Regiment in Libreville decided to give his female supportive personnel (secretaries, IT-support etc) additional training with the purpose of including them in patrols, exercises and IRT. This was well received by the women and increased the understanding on how patrols were met when they were all male or mixed was different. When the patrols were all male they were met with more hostility and with a negative attitude.

A local women's organization provided EUFOR RD CONGO with information for a list of points of contact to be informed when situations with sexual violence had taken place or are at risk to occur. An Example from the Operation was when a young wife with a baby were left alone with a drunk FARDC soldier as her husband urgently was taken away with a EUFOR ambulance trying to save his life with a leg amputation. "In this situation it would have been very helpful to know how to contact/inform this woman" one of the doctors said the morning after.

#### Key Success Factors

At first it was the designation of a Gender Advisor to the operation. The Gender knowledge and awareness from Gender Focal Points and their Commanders was also a

key to success. The basic Gender training given to 250 participants of the Operation was crucial. The system of Gender Focal Points was also a very important factor especially with the work on developing the Gender Reporting system. A clear Direction and Guidance on Gender Issues together with a clear support from the OpCdr and FCdr was also crucial for the achievements.

Another factor was that the Gender work was performed in a concrete, clear and practical way rather than theoretical.

We tried to build good networks and relationships with local women's organizations (with slightly different objectives) even though the operation was very short. It was a way to, try out good ways for performing this work in the future. The idea, which was achieved, was to present to the European Union with a Roadmap on how to implement UNSCR 1325 in future European Union Operations. It was a little bit like an experiment to find good and best practices for the future.

Implementing Gender into Military and other organizations is about fundamental human rights values, democracy and efficiency!

If you talk to 48% of the population to have 100 % of the picture it is not hard to understand that this might not be the way of working...

If you talk to women as well as men in an area of Operation then the facts, analysis, assessment and actions will be more correct, something that has not always been the case before.

Gender mainstreaming needs:

Strategies

Knowledge

Human resources (gender experts)

Plans and

Evaluation

It is about working to implement Gender Perspectives in the same way you work to implement and change other issues!

To ensure that Gender mainstreaming considerations are incorporated in Pre Deployment training is important but it has to be performed in a concrete and practical way rather than a theoretical. Gender training is crucial and has to be combined with added resources also in the AOO, such as gender advisors. The Nordic Battle Group for which Sweden is framework nation (with the Operational Headquarters in London), in 2008, will have two Gender advisors, one at the Operational Headquarters and one at the Force Headquarters. Those two are being recruited right now. The role of them will be very much about working with Women's Constituencies in AOO. The work with Women's Constituencies does not happen by itself, we have to designate people for that purpose. These Gender Advisors are working directly under the Operational- and Force Commanders.

The Swedish Armed Forces, the Swedish Police and the National Rescue Agency are working very hard to build the Gender Expertise inside the Organizations. The Gender research is constantly ongoing. In the National College of Defence Gender Researchers perform studies on our organization

The above mentioned organizations together with the Association of Military Officers in Sweden work in a context of the EQUAL Development Partnership called GENDER FORCE. The work within GENDER FORCE is based on Gender Balancing and Gender Mainstreaming. The purpose of the work is to improve Swedish international work in relief Operations and post-conflict peacekeeping missions so that the needs of all people in AOOs are seen to and that the opinion of everyone is heard and all Human Rights are respected The work is about raising knowledge training, recruiting more women and to integrate Gender into all parts from strategy to daily work.

At the moment we are working with a Gender Coach programme, training Gender Advisors with the purpose to have an active pool of them, (training modules etc.) Let me tell you more about the special project Gender Coach; quite often individuals including senior management personnel do not see that they have a lack of knowledge when it comes to Gender and Gender Equality. We tend to make issues about Gender personal, private and emotional as we believe we already know all there is to know about this topic. "Oh I have a wife, so I know about women" or "I have both a daughter and a son so I have seen the differences myself". Then you generalize from a very personal point and that is of course not professional. If you already believe you "know it" then you will probably not be inclined to attend training and education...This is of course a bigger problem when the Top level have a lack of knowledge on Gender issues. This group is as we all know also VERY busy and occupied and it can be very hard to make them attend a training session for a longer period of time. Therefore, to reach this group we started the project Gender Coach. The model for this project was my adept and me as her mentor for two years. It was a traditional mentor project but as her profession is Gender Equality our talks were quite much about that. After a while I realized that I started to see the "world" in a different way, I saw Gender where it for me did not at all exist before and mostly I saw that our country, organization and society is not as Gender Equal as I thought before The Gender Coach Programme is a one year pilot where we can already see results.

It is a concept that provides gender coaches for senior officials, aiming at enhancing their knowledge in gender equality, twelve managers within the managerial bodies of the organizations have been handpicked, as well as twelve coaches with extensive knowledge in gender equality.

The reason for choosing to work with the top management is that they both have the power and ability to influence structures and behaviours within the organizations. Hence, it's important for them to deepen their understanding of gender equality. Many times though, for people at this level it is too time consuming to take part in in-depth training programmes, which is why coaching is an effective way to achieve the desired result. The

aim is to implement the gender coach program as a regular activity within the partnership organizations.

After gaining more knowledge in gender equality the Chief of Staff of the Army says that he has altered some of his work routines - for instance the practice of the regular meetings with the conscripts' elected representatives.

"I've decided to meet the men and women separately as well as together, in order to establish a more effective communication

Finally Gender balance will not *alone* make Gender Equality/Equal Opportunities, integrating 1325 and a Gender perspective to Operations and SSR requires Gender Balancing and Gender Mainstreaming. It is about numbers, and there is a critical mass, and knowledge which will guarantee a quality in our actions towards Gender Equality

Thank you for your attention.