

Women Delivering Peace & Security Conference

Overview by Dr Margaret Ward, Chair of Hanna's House

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President of Ireland, Michael D. Higgins arrives at Croke Park Cusack Stand for the Women Delivering Peace & Security Conference and is greeted by Dr Margaret Ward, Chair of Hanna's House and Dr Joanna McMinn, Company Secretary for Hanna's House

On 5 November 2012 Hanna's House hosted an All Ireland Conference on 'Women Delivering Peace and Security' as an initiative to enable politicians, women's organisations and civic society from both sides of the border to come together to discuss the importance for Irish women of the provisions within United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, on women, peace and security (UNSCR 1325). The work of Hanna's House over the past four years has been to gather evidence from women to support

the call for the full implementation of UNSCR1325 within Northern Ireland. We have developed a Strategic Alliance of allies in doing this, and the conference was the culmination of our work in bringing all this to a strategic level. Our collective efforts brought us to the point where we had the confidence to know that women from all over Ireland would be eager participants in an all-Ireland conference with a theme of 'Women Delivering Peace and Security'. And our reputation, developed over many years of grass

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roots working and networking, was sufficient for us to hope that an invitation to the newly elected President of Ireland would be accepted. As Chair of Hanna's House for the past 7 years, I would like to pay tribute to all the members of the Hanna's House board – past and present – and to Shirley Graham, our project coordinator for the past 4 years.

From late 2011 Hanna's House has been meeting with politicians from the south and the north, discussing the implementation of UNSCR 1325 throughout Ireland, using the Good Friday Agreement and its institutions as a vehicle for application. In March 2012 we made a presentation to a Senate committee; we later gave evidence to the Good Friday Implementation Committee and we met with the N.I. Assembly through the All-Party Group on UNSCR1325. In all of this we have called on the London and Dublin administrations to work together on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 by having sections on Northern Ireland in their national action plans that complement each other. The conference gave us further opportunity to develop this approach, through the evidence of experts and through the sharing of ideas in round table discussions. One third of the participants were from the north, providing a strong basis for dialogue with their southern counterparts.

The Croke Park Conference was opened by Irish President Michael D Higgins, who emphasised the urgency of the conference and exhorted politicians not to allow UNSCR1325 to 'suffer the accusation of history of being merely rhetorical.' President Higgins was followed by a keynote address by Professor Christine Chinkin of the London School of Economics, giving an overview of UNSCR 1325 from a global perspective. She emphasised the importance of recognising women as

stakeholders, who would have many different perspectives to be represented, rather than as passive victims of the past. As a sober reminder she concluded by stating that there were 37 National Action Plans for UNSCR1325 but they had not succeeded in changing implementation on the ground. There remained an urgent need to ensure that women's values were represented within negotiating teams and all processes.

A panel of speakers concentrated on particular aspects of UNSCR1325 within the Irish context. Professor Monica McWilliams, of the Transitional Justice Institute at University of Ulster, and formerly of the NI Women's Coalition and the NI Human Rights Commission looked at issues related to violence against women and the need for gender mainstreaming within the judiciary. From the Police Service of Northern Ireland Deputy Chief Constable Judith Gillespie acknowledged the historic nature of the conference as she examined gender perspectives on policing and security, from the increased numbers of women in the PSNI to the role of women, particularly as mothers, at times of civil unrest. Fiona Buckley of the 50:50 Group gave a spirited debunking of all the arguments against using quotas to improve women's representation, highlighting the importance and shortcomings of forthcoming legislation on women's political representation in the Republic. Sean Barrett, Co-Chair of the newly formed North South Inter-Parliamentary Association, described the aims and objectives of the Association, one of the final strands of the Good Friday Agreement to be implemented and his hopes that it would provide a vehicle for constructive engagement. Claire Hackett, board member of Hanna's House but speaking as a member of Healing Through Remembering, spoke of acknowledging and accounting for the impact of the conflict on women, concluding that if gendered harms are not recognised we are perpetuating silence and injustice. We also lose the opportunity to create a better future.



Left to right: Ann Hope, Margaret Ward, Linda Kelly, Katharina O'Cathaoir, Michael D. Higgins, Emma Rogan, Shirley Graham, Claire Hackett, Joanna McMinn, and Catherine O'Rourke.

Keynote Speech: Bringing Women out from the Margins'

by Professor Christine Chinkin



It is a great honour to be invited here today, especially as so many Irish women from the North and South have been active in many ways in movements for peace – as academics, as politicians, as advocates for peace. Why does UNSCR 1325 matter? Are we getting anywhere? Since 2004, there has been increased understanding that women and girls are impacted uniquely and disproportionately by the direct and indirect effects of conflict and its aftermath. This has begun to inform the development of rule of law interventions that specifically address women's justice and security concerns. There are currently more efforts to reform discriminatory legislation, enhance access to justice and end impunity for crimes of sexual and gender-based violence, and to ensure women's participation in institutions and peace building forums as part of a comprehensive response to create transformational change in the lives of women and girls.

Gender expertise is an area where the United Nations needs to be able to access the right capacities to ensure that women's needs are adequately addressed in post-conflict peace building. In a recent review of how gender expertise is structured and deployed in post-conflict contexts, undertaken by UN-Women in partnership with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Political Affairs, UNDP, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and OHCHR, it was found that there was no system-wide approach to identifying the gender expertise needed in the aftermath of conflict. A more systematic approach is needed to deploy adequate capacities for the effective implementation of women, peace and security commitments. The review also noted that gender advisers tended to be concentrated in gender units in the field; it was recommended that gender expertise be embedded within key peace building sectors instead and that senior gender advisory capacity be located in the offices of senior field leaders. In conflict and post-conflict settings, a chronic failure of justice institutions to be responsive to women's rights and concerns results in high levels of underreporting and attrition. Since 2004, more efforts have been made to ensure that the mandates, procedures and organizational cultures of justice and security institutions are gender sensitive. Greater provision of legal aid,

paralegal support and awareness-raising efforts are empowering women. As a result of these initiatives, more perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence are being brought to justice in such countries as Chad, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Nepal, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, the Sudan and Kosovo. The growing use of mobile courts is complementing these developments, bringing judges and prosecutors to otherwise remote crime scenes in eastern Chad, eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Nepal and elsewhere. A significant increase in funding for women's access to justice programmes is needed. Such initiatives need to focus on underlying economic and social issues driving inequality. Furthermore, a holistic approach to access to justice that addresses physical, psychological and wide socio-economic consequences of violations is required. In Burundi, Liberia and Somalia, one-stop centres that offer survivors medical care, psychological counselling, access to police investigators and legal assistance in one location are proving to be successful at mitigating secondary victimization and reducing court delays, while improving conviction rates.

For the full version of Professor Christine Chinkin's speech click on: www.hannashouse.net/ChristineChinkin



Left to right: Sean Barrett, TD, Professor Monica McWilliams, Deputy Chief Constable Judith Gillespie, Ann Hope, Fiona Buckley and Claire Hackett.

'Truth Recovery Processes and Women's Experience'

by Claire Hackett

I am going to discuss women and truth recovery in relation to the conflict and I want to consider three questions/issues:

- The importance of dealing with the legacy of the conflict
- The necessity of including women i.e. of acknowledging and accounting for the impact of the conflict on women
- The current context and the avenues for dealing with gendered impact of the conflict, including U.N. Resolution 1325.

A few weeks ago I came across a review in the Guardian written by the author Helen Dunmore about a novel by Sebastian Faulks. She wrote:

'The cessation of an event does not bring about its ending, if it continues to throb and relive itself through memory. The whole novel is an indictment of the cod psychology that advises human beings to 'move on', shucking off their pasts as if these were a skin rather than an impregnation of the entire being. And what is true of an individual may also be true of a culture and nation, which cannot reinvent themselves without taking account of the fabric from which they are made.'

This strikes a chord with me because of my conviction about the necessity to deal with the past. I believe we need to work through the past to create the future. We owe it to those who have suffered and been harmed. They need and deserve truth, acknowledgement and justice. We also owe it to our future. We need to create a different and better future and prevent the possibility of recurrence of the conflict. To do this we need to understand and learn from the abuses that fuelled and characterised the conflict. This informs my work in Falls Community Council and Healing Through Remembering. It has also been a central part of Hanna's House peace building project over the last 5 years.

This brings me to my second point about the inclusion of women. How do we ensure that women's experience is included in processes for dealing with the past? How do we investigate the gendered impact of the conflict? Hanna's House has organised a number of conferences and seminars on this theme. This work has clearly highlighted the absence of women in current processes. Our discussions have focussed on analysing and understanding this absence.

A number of the speakers we have invited over the last two years have highlighted the ways in which harms against women are simply not recognised. For example if the focus of official investigations is on those who died as a result of the conflict the majority of those are men. To recognise the harms that affected

women we need to see and understand the impact of those deaths on families. Women have been left as the sole breadwinners and have had to take on the burden of care and responsibility. This has also been true when we look at the impact of those injured in the conflict and the impact of imprisonment. The burden of care and responsibility has fallen on women. For many women these responsibilities have taken place in the context of little or no state support. Indeed the context has been one of state hostility or harassment. In many ways these impacts on women are familiar and well known but are not counted as irreparable harms which call for investigation and reparation.

One of the results of the failure to recognise these harms is that they continue to have long term effects. The poverty into which many families were plunged has continued as a cycle and we need to understand this as a gendered issue because of women's role in families. Another very under examined area is the traumatic effect on women and families of death, injury and imprisonment during a prolonged conflict. This trauma also has long term consequences and intergenerational trauma has been continuously highlighted by women and women's groups and yet as a society we have not fully investigated the nature and extent of intergenerational trauma – something we would need to do if we hope to address it. In doing this we would need to recognise trauma as a social and political issue and not confine it to the personal individual psychological sphere.

A final point that needs to be understood to address the impact of the conflict on women is that this is a complicated picture. Gender intersects with other structures of inequality such as class as I have indicated. So if, for example, we do not take into account socio economic impacts and differences we cannot see the impact of the conflict on women. Put simply, not all women's experiences were the same, not all impacts were shared. The impoverishment of some women and families is one example. Class complicates the picture and so also does relationship with the state. Women were only a minority of combatants but they were there and this experience needs to be recognised and in doing this it is relevant whether they were state or non state actors, whether they were pro state or anti state. We can see this in ongoing cases being prosecuted in court. For example, the impact of Padraic Wilson's current detention on his wife and family.



Claire Hackett

The mapping of women's experiences of the conflict and the impact of the conflict on women has mainly emerged from grass roots processes. It has not come through official processes – public enquiries, the work of the Historical Enquiries Team, Police Ombudsman investigations etc. To date there has been a piecemeal approach and a focus on personal accountability not institutional accountability. This is also an individualised approach which hides rather than reveals gender.

In Hanna's House discussions we have explored what transitional justice mechanisms such as truth recovery and truth commission processes could offer, to reveal and account for gendered experiences of the conflict. We know that truth commissions and truth recovery processes are not a panacea – they have also excluded women. The idea of a truth commission is often mooted here but if it was to work for women's experiences and account for gendered harms it would need to be designed to do so.

If gendered harms are not recognised we are perpetuating silence and injustice. We also lose the opportunity to create a better future. The widest possible range of experience must be included in acknowledging, remembering and learning from the past. This whole area has a bearing on UNSCR1325 – the subject of this conference. If properly implemented in relation to the conflict, 1325 can help deliver a process to acknowledge and account for the impact of the conflict on women.

To access the video recording of Claire Hackett's speech click here:

www.hannashouse.net/clairehackett

'Gender Quotas and Women's Representation'

by *Fiona Buckley of the 5050 Group*

"A society that is without the voice and vision of a woman is not less feminine. It is less human"
(Mary Robinson).

The legacy of the historical exclusion of women from political citizenship; and the bias towards traditional gender roles have resulted in women's under-representation in politics as parliamentarians worldwide. In 2012 the world average is 20.5% female parliamentarians with a 79.5% 'over-representation' of men. Progress in women's representation is slow, static and subject to reversals. For example in 1990 Ireland ranked 37th place in world-rankings and today we are in 89th position. To address the problems of women's under-representation in politics and public life over 100 nation-states worldwide have introduced gender quotas.

Gender quotas are a necessary mechanism to guarantee a certain percentage of women are present either on the ballot paper or in parliament. They act as a process of change and a facilitator of women's political inclusion; and compensate for the many gendered barriers of accessing political office. Currently, in Dáil Éireann 15.1% of parliamentarians are women and 84.9%

are men; in the Northern Ireland Assembly the numbers are 18.5% women's representation; 81.5% Men's representation; and in the UK House of Commons: 22.3% Women's representation; 77.7% Men's representation.

The 50:50 Group launched a successful nationwide campaign which amended the Electoral (Political Funding) Act 2012 in the South to ensure that there is a candidate selection quota of 30% women and 30% men on the ballot paper at the next general election. The quota will rise to 40% seven years thereafter; and parties will lose half of their State funding if they do not meet quota requirements. While the candidate quota is a very positive development in Ireland, it is not applicable at local government level and hence there is more work to be done to ensure that women have access to decision-making structures at all levels. To view a video recording of Fiona's presentation click here: www.hannashouse.net/fionabuckley and for a copy of her powerpoint presentation click here: : www.hannashouse.net/fionabuckley and for a copy of her powerpoint presentation click here: <http://www.hannashouse.net/fionabuckleyppt>

Participants at the conference . . .



Speech by Deputy Chief Constable Judith Gillespie

[Edited version of her speech] As I refreshed my memory on the various articles of the Security Council Resolution 1325, I marvelled at the huge, progressive and symbolic step it was to have the endorsement of the United Nations for such an important resolution. The Resolution has made a difference, but there is still some way to go. Women still remain very much in the background, often in a crucial supporting role, and yet it is our own Northern Ireland post conflict experience that women have played such an important role in conflict management, resolution and sustainable peace. [...] In policing we have come a long way in a very short period of time. The transformational change programme brought about by the Patten Report resulted in the target of 30% Catholic membership of PSNI being achieved through the 50:50 recruitment process. Less recognised but equally significant has been the increase in female representation, to 27%. Whilst deeply controversial, radical measures were required to make material compositional change and to allow the policing service to evolve into the more representative service of today. Whilst Patten didn't set a specific gender representation target, by default the 50:50 process has not only increased female representation in policing but also in many traditionally 'male dominated' specialisms – 'A rising tide lifts all boats'. Being seen to take one area of unfairness and under-representation seriously has resulted in other areas also benefitting. Greater female representation at rank, and in senior positions, has enabled women to have a greater influence in decision making locally and nationally. We also have joint specific responsibility with the Policing Board under Section 48 of the Police (NI) Act 2000 to produce a Gender Action Plan. The current Plan focuses not just on internal equality and diversity but also on the service we provide.

The greatest increase in the % of female officers is on the front line in uniformed response and neighbourhood policing roles, 40% female, working with and in communities to increase visibility and trust. A growing level of community confidence is at least giving us some reassurance that this strategy is working. What we need to see of course is those young women progressing through the ranks – and that's a real challenge in the current economic climate as most police organisations seek to reduce management on-costs, and promotion opportunities are more limited.

[...] In terms of protection and prevention, as we emerge from conflict new and emerging issues have required the PSNI to develop and put in place resources to deal with issues such as human trafficking and honour based violence. Over the past few

years alone we have rescued over 80 women from the grip of Human Traffickers and many more protracted operations are ongoing to ensure that Northern Ireland becomes a hostile place for these criminals.

It is well documented in research that women experience fear of crime to a greater extent than men.

Any police service needs to be conscious of this fact and our patrolling patterns need to be sensitive to this. Our response to crimes, such as domestic abuse, sexual abuse and rape have also significantly improved during my service in the police. These are crimes which leave long lasting, and sometimes life changing, emotional scars long after the physical injuries have healed and where women are, more often than not, the victims and men, more often than not, the perpetrators. The increased confidence and greater acceptance of policing has opened up many new doors, particularly in really vulnerable communities. I reflect on how isolated those women must have felt at the height of the conflict. Victims have greater confidence that they can report these crimes to police and that they will be properly supported and not criticised for seeking the help and protection that they so desperately require. The fact that many of these crimes occur within the sanctity of the victim's home makes the crime all the more insidious and the impact on the victim all the more traumatic. Policing of these crimes is now much more sensitive, informed by the direct involvement of victims' support groups in training, and just recently we have launched Victim and Witness Care Units which bring together police, victim support groups and the Public Prosecution Service all housed and working together. Often the traditional approach has been to require the victim to adapt to the structure of the Criminal Justice system. Now we are looking at changing the structure of the system to meet the needs of the victim. What a novel concept! But it is informed by women playing a leadership role in the system. And this needs to happen more. To access a video recording of DCC Judith Gillespie's full speech click here:

www.hannashouse.net/judithgillespie

and for a copy of her full speech click on:

www.hannashouse.net/monicamcwilliamspt



New North South Inter-Parliamentary Association by Sean Barrett, TD

Ceann Comhairle Sean Barrett set out the process by which the newly formed North South Inter-Parliamentary Association was set up under the terms of the Good Friday Agreement. The Association, which includes 25 members from the North and 25 from the South, met for the first time in October 2012 and discussed the issue of child protection and the re-opening of the Ulster Canal. It will meet four times annually to consider issues affecting both sides of the border and will work together to find solutions. The next meeting will take place in April 2013 and as yet the issues under consideration for discussion have to be chosen. Hanna's House have suggested that UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security be one of the items on the agenda. To access the video recording of Ceann Comhairle Sean Barrett's speech click here www.hannashouse.net/seanbarrett

'It was just a Domestic' by Professor Monica McWilliams



Nura Hagi, Shirley Graham, Judith Gillespie and Monica McWilliams

Professor Monica McWilliams spoke on the issue of gender mainstreaming in the judiciary. She discussed how crimes against women are largely left unpunished; how the public/private divide on violence against women is rooted in patriarchy; and that women are often the victims of discriminatory laws and cultural norms. This has created an urgent need for cultural and legal reform. She outlined how the demarcation of gender roles due to culture and religion can create internalized powerlessness within women. She also outlined how access to the public space is often closed down for women activists and politicians through

intimidation and slander. How questioning women's morals can lead women to withdraw from political life. And, how effective these mechanisms are in excluding and sometimes forcing women, to work behind the scenes in order to maintain anonymity. She also discussed her own experience as leader of the N.I. Women's Coalition, the struggle for women to be accepted at the peace table; the derision they experienced; and how they overcame issues resulting from the male dominated culture they were working in. Her presentation culminates in a call for the need to reinstate trust in state institutions post conflict and asks how representative are the judiciary? What are the mechanisms for accountability? Are human rights at the centre of the changes? How will the institutional culture be reoriented? And who will do the training and who will oversee it? To access the video recording of Professor Monica McWilliams full speech click here: www.hannashouse.net/monicamcwilliams and for a copy of her powerpoint presentation click on: www.hannashouse.net/monicamcwilliamsppt

Conference Participant Recommendations

Participants at the conference discussed the pillars of UNSCR 1325: women's participation and representation; and gender perspectives on conflict prevention; protection of women and girls; and relief and recovery. A briefing document has been circulated to the Hanna's House Board and will form an integral part of our strategic planning for the future. In relation to the Good Friday Agreement, participants support the Hanna's House proposal to retrospectively weave UNSCR 1325 into the institutions of the Peace Agreement; to ensure that they set gender targets; and that they have adopted a gender perspective on all of their work, especially on the long term effects of trauma.

On the subject of the monitoring and evaluation of Ireland's National Action Plan, participants called for Ireland to draw on international best practice; to ensure women's inclusion informally and formally in the process (through networks, groups, and centres); for resources to be made available for an ongoing consultation with women across Ireland; to be kept informed of reporting procedures; annual reports to be made available; to link the monitoring and evaluation of UNSCR 1325 with the CEDAW reporting process; and for North-South comparative research to be undertaken.

Tribute to Inez McCormack

During the conference a poetry recital took place to pay tribute to the outstanding work of women's rights activist and trade unionist Inez McCormack, who chaired the Consultative Group on the creation of Ireland's National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 and worked tirelessly to bring together people with different views and opinions to negotiate consensus and to move the processes on. She has won many national and international awards for her community activism and her commitment to creating a more equal and just Irish society. Inez is currently ill and Hanna's House send her their very best wishes.

The poetry recital was chaired by Avila Kilmurray of Community Foundation Northern Ireland and included poems read out by Marie Claire Kah, African Leadership award winner for community work; Dr Rosie Burrows; Dr Melanie Hoewer of IBIS, UCD; and Bronagh Hinds of DemocraShe. One of the poems is reprinted below:

'Upwards' by Rosie Burrows

(to the laughter of all our children in conflict, transition and post conflict countries)

fairisle tank top, big boots and big hair
the lap of sea at ballygally where I had
a dream of you before I knew you would
incarnate to the blessing of a copper leaf
falling lapbound in Clifton, Bristol

Daughters of Copper Woman

you were longed for in the
unconscious way sea salmon
slip upriver unknowing rocks
lie ahead
an upward swim, strong tail needed,
growing silverclad muscles
with each leap up

your birth changed everything

6lb.14ozs in a March heat haze
my feet reaching the ground
deeper than hopscotch
your dads wide smile radiance
grandparents slow dropping
notions of how things should be

two big haired heathens child
birthed open northern shells

We rocked you.

'Where to next for Hanna's House?'

by Linda Kelly, Board Member

As many of you reading will know, the current funding cycle for Hanna's House comes to an end in December 2012. However the inspiration for and ethos of the project continues to shine brightly across volunteers and organizations all over Ireland – North and South. While the official funding may stop for a period, the commitment to the ongoing development of Hanna's House will not. We will continue as an all-island feminist community working for a non violent, just society that welcomes diversity. Hanna's House started out as an idea long before funding came on board and we will continue after this particular cycle has ended!

Nevertheless, the cessation of the current funding challenges the Board to seek new opportunities for Hanna's House to develop and move forward. In addition the Board itself will also undergo some changes as some members move onto new projects and new places. We would ask all our supporters to be patient as we face into 2013 with a period of reflection on what shape this development will take. We would also like to invite supporters

who are interested in becoming more involved with the strategic planning for Hanna's House to get in touch by contacting Dr Margaret Ward at info@wrda.net or Dr Catherine O'Rourke at CF.Orouke@ulster.ac.uk

At this stage in the process, we know that we wish to continue our core work of building an Alliance and promoting our work on UNSCR 1325 and to this end we are delighted to be working with the Cross Border Action Group to co-host a follow up seminar, bringing together stakeholders engaged on UNSCR 1325 north and south to discuss the possibility of creating co-operative action plans. The enduring strength of Hanna's House has been the time, thoughts and energy our supporters have given to the project. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your engagement and hope you will continue to do be involved into the future.

Dr Margaret Ward, Claire Hackett, Ann Hope, Linda Kelly, Joanna McMinn, Catherine O'Rourke, Emma Rogan and Shirley Graham.



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