

## DOSEŽKI IN STALIŠČA PRI IZVAJANJU RESOLUCIJE VS OZN 1325 NA MINISTRSTVU ZA OBRAMBO IN V VOJSKI SRBIJE

## ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERSPECTIVES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UNSCR 1325 IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND THE SERBIAN ARMED FORCES

**Povzetek** V članku so predstavljene pozitivne izkušnje pri izvajanju Resolucije OZN 1325 na Ministrstvu za obrambo in v Vojski Srbije. Ker prvi nacionalni akcijski načrt za uresničevanje Resolucije OZN 1325 – Ženske, mir in varnost v Republiki Srbiji (2010–2015) ni več v veljavi, so doseženi rezultati najboljši dokaz pomembnih izboljšav na področju enakosti spolov na Ministrstvu za obrambo in v Vojski Srbije. Poleg boljše ozaveščenosti na področju spolov in večje zastopanosti žensk v obrambnem sistemu ti rezultati kažejo tudi na izboljšane vloge, položaj in zaščito žensk. Za prihodnje odgovore na izzive, ki se še pojavljajo na poti do popolne objektivizacije enakosti spolov na Ministrstvu za obrambo in v Vojski Srbije, so nujna dodatna prizadevanja, da se pravočasno odkrijejo, celovito razumejo, pravilno tolmačijo in objektivno predstavijo. Danes, podobno kot pri pripravi prejšnjega dokumenta, ima Ministrstvo za obrambo Republike Srbije glavno vlogo pri oblikovanju novega nacionalnega akcijskega načrta za obdobje 2016–2020, še zlasti pri opredeljevanju ciljev in določanju dinamike njihovega uresničevanja. Pri tem se upoštevajo sodobni standardi na področju enakosti spolov, pridobljeno znanje, učenje iz izkušenj, rezultati empiričnih raziskav ter izkušnje drugih držav na regionalni in globalni ravni.

**Ključne besede** *Enakost spolov, ženske v vojski, Resolucija VS OZN 1325, Republika Srbija, Ministrstvo za obrambo in Vojska Srbije.*

**Abstract** This paper reviews positive experiences in the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 in the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces (MoD and SAF). Since the first National Action Plan for the Implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia (2010–2015) is no longer valid, the best evidence of the significant improvements that have been made regarding gender equality in the MoD and SAF are the achieved

results. In addition to improved gender awareness, and a higher representation of women in the defence system, these results also indicate that the roles, positions and protection of women have been improved. Future responses to all the challenges that stand in a way of full objectification of gender equality in the MoD and SAF require additional efforts for their timely identification, comprehensive understanding, correct interpretation and objective presentation. Today, as was the case with the previous document, the MoD of the Republic of Serbia has a key role in drafting the new National Action Plan for the period 2016-2020, especially with regard to the definition of its objectives and determining the dynamics of their implementation, thereby taking into consideration contemporary standards in the area of gender equality, accumulated knowledge, lessons learned, empirical research findings and experience gained by other countries at the regional and global level.

**Key words** *Gender equality, women in armed forces, UNSCR 1325, Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Defence and Serbian Armed Forces.*

**Introduction** As part of the overall efforts made by international organizations, states and civil society organizations to improve the status of women, and as a result of recognizing the crucial importance of respecting the right to equality and equal participation and representation of women and men in all spheres of social life, some very important activities have been initiated and carried out in the Republic of Serbia in recent years. The demonstrated political will and determination of the Government of the Republic of Serbia to carry out the necessary reform steps towards the integration of gender equality in the security sector have led not only to a shift at the institutional level, through establishing new bodies and mechanisms for gender equality, but also to changes in legal regulations, strategies and plans. No less important are the achievements made in raising awareness of gender issues in members of all the institutions in the security sector, primarily through education and training, but also through media promotion.

Numerous results that were achieved during the previous five-year period of implementation of the National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia are visible today in almost all aspects of everyday work and life of the members of the security sector. In that context, the development and implementation of this document have resulted in extremely positive effects in the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces in terms of mainstreaming gender equality in the reform process.

## **1 DEVELOPMENT AND CONTENTS OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN IN THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA (2010-2015)**

Considering international efforts towards the empowerment of women and giving them a more significant role in peace building and conflict resolution, and taking into account the need to respect and implement the adopted United Nations Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security, as well as the commitment of the

Republic of Serbia to reach the international standards in this field contained in the relevant documents of the EU, OSCE and NATO, by developing a National Action Plan for the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia (2010-2015) starting in 2010, for the first time special attention was directed to the improvement of the status and role of women in the security sector.

Although the strategic and legislative frameworks that govern the issue of gender equality were already established in the Republic of Serbia, a large number of civil society organizations, whose work is mostly directed towards the protection of women's human rights, actively advocated the development and adoption of an action plan to address the implementation of UN SC Resolution 1325. These organizations, coordinated by the Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence (BFPE), put forward their positions in 2009 in a publication entitled "United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Serbia – on Women, Peace and Security"<sup>1</sup>, which gives guidelines and possible areas of action in accordance with the content of the UNSC Resolution 1325.

In June 2010, the year which marked the tenth anniversary of the adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325, the Government of the Republic of Serbia, on the initiative of civil society organizations, decided<sup>2</sup> to start drafting a National Action Plan for the implementation of this resolution, which would be carried out over the next five years. With this purpose the Government Working Group for drafting a National Action Plan for the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia (2010-2015) was formed, consisting of representatives of the twelve relevant Ministries, Departments and Agencies of the Government. The Ministry of Defence was tasked with providing expert, administrative and technical support to the Working Group of the Government, and that Ministry had a coordinating role throughout the process of drafting the document (Stojković, 2011). The task entrusted to the Working Group was very ambitious and difficult, bearing in mind that in the past there had been no implemented research with findings that could serve as a basis for drafting this document or for the inclusion of a gender perspective into the policies, plans and practices of the security sector of the Republic of Serbia in order to improve the status of women through the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325.

Based on national statistics, it was, however, known that in 2010, at the time of drafting the document, women accounted for 51.36% of the total population of the Republic of Serbia, but both quantitative and qualitative indicators of women employed in the security sector were not available. Therefore, in a very short time, initial research was conducted in order to obtain valid data on the representation and

<sup>1</sup> *United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Serbia – on Women, Peace and Security (2009), BFPE, Belgrade; (Срб) Резолуција 1325 Савета безбедности Уједињених нација у Србији - о женама, миру и безбедности, Београдски фонд за политичку изузетност, Београд.*

<sup>2</sup> „Службени гласник РС“, број 44/10, Београд, 30. јун 2010. године.

position of women in the security sector, so that they could serve as the initial basis not only for the development of the document itself, but also for the monitoring of progress made during the later application of the National Action Plan for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325. Research findings showed that the representation of women in the security sector in the Republic of Serbia in 2010 amounted to 27.40%. This percentage was, in fact, even then, nearly a satisfactory result, but at the same time, it was clear that this is a very complex issue, which in addition to adequate numerical representation of women applies to a whole range of other indicators. Therefore, the Working Group was largely focused on finding ways to substantially improve the position of women in terms of respect of their human rights, according to which all human beings are free to develop their personal abilities and make choices without limitations imposed by strict gender roles, and to be equally taken into account, valued and supported with regard to the different behaviour, desires and needs of women and men.

In accordance with such a commitment, and based on the results of the research carried out and an analysis of strategic, normative and planning documents on gender equality adopted in the Republic of Serbia, as well as the effectiveness of their implementation, based on the content of international conventions and resolutions and the experiences of other countries which had already adopted national action plans for the implementation of Resolution 1325, drafting contents of the document and the identification of general and specific objectives and activities started. On this occasion, care was taken that the formulations should be as precise as possible to enable monitoring and evaluation of the effects of the changes on the basis of indicators<sup>3</sup>.

The completion of the draft document was followed by a public debate. The draft document was submitted for consideration to the competent government authorities, posted on the website of the Ministry of Defence and opened to the public, enabling the submission of objections and suggestions from all interested parties via e-mail. The draft was also discussed in public debates that were organized for this occasion. Some of the objections to the content of the new document which arose from the public debate, particularly those provided by the Ombudsman and civil society organizations, were recognized and included in the text of the document proposal.

As a result of these efforts, on 23 December 2010, less than six months after the decision on the development of this document was made, the Government of the Republic of Serbia approved the National Action Plan for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia (2010-2015) (hereinafter: NAP)<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> *A list of 74 indicators, classified in seven groups according to the chapters of the NAP, was made. Later attempts made for the purpose of their optimization (including reducing the number of indicators) have never been finalized. In the absence of a unified list of indicators, some institutions have drawn up their own indicators and used them for reporting on the implementation of the NAP.*

<sup>4</sup> „Службени гласник Републике Србије”, број 102/10, 30. децембар 2010. године.

The document contains seven chapters, in which the following seven general objectives were defined:

- The development and functioning of institutional bodies and gender equality mechanisms for the implementation of the NAP;
- Increasing the representation of women in the security sector and their impact on issues relating to peace and security;
- Increasing participation and influence of women in decision-making in Defence and security;
- Increasing women's participation in international cooperation, conflict resolution, and post-conflict, and greater participation in multinational operations;
- Use of the instruments for the legal protection of women;
- The education and training of members of the security sector in the spirit of UNSC Resolution 1325;
- Providing media support for the objectives of the NAP.

The activities envisaged by the NAP are aimed primarily at changing gender stereotypes in the minds of citizens and members of the security sector through continual education and information, media campaigns, organization of expert meetings and the like. In their turn, they need to ensure increased representation of women in the security sector, significant participation by women in decision-making on issues relating to peace and security, and more effective protection of women in peace and post-conflict rehabilitation of society and in multinational operations.

Objective media reporting on the implementation of the NAP and its affirmative role in promoting gender equality was very important, in order to overcome prejudices and gender stereotypes, shape public opinion, and raise the awareness of the general public of the role of women in society, especially when it comes to issues relating to peace and security.

## **2 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN (2010-2015) IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND SERBIAN ARMED FORCES**

Bearing in mind the role of the Ministry of Defence during the preparation of the NAP, as well as a clear commitment to the integration of gender equality in the Defence system reform, the Ministry was the first in the security sector to approach the implementation of the NAP in a planned and organized way in order to achieve its objectives and application as envisaged in the document. In a formal sense, the implementation of the NAP was initiated by the adoption of the Decision of the Minister of Defence on the implementation of measures within the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces, defined by the NAP, as well as by the approval of the plan of activities for the implementation of the NAP in the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces in 2011.

After that, during the whole period of implementation of the NAP, ending in 2015, plans for achieving the goals envisaged by the NAP were made on an annual basis.

In the annual plans, the responsibilities of individual organizational units of the MoD and SAF for the realization of activities, and deadlines for their execution, were determined, and a number of activities whose implementation was supported by international partners were also included, which have contributed significantly to the creation of conditions for integrating the principle of gender equality into the defence system reform.

Planning, the coordination of the NAP's implementation, and reporting on progress were all the responsibilities of the Strategic Planning Department of the Defence Policy Sector of the MoD, which tried to include as many as possible of the organizational units and members of the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces in its plans and implementation of activities. The Institute for Strategic Research of the Defence Policy Sector of the MoD, as a scientific research institution, had a very important role in this process.

Transparency of the content of the reports on the implementation of the action plans in the MoD and SAF for the preceding five years of the NAP's implementation, which were made on the basis of analyses of reports from the organizational units of the MoD and SAF responsible for the implementation of the planned activities, was achieved by their regular publication on the website of the Ministry of Defence.

It should be emphasized that significant results in the implementation of the NAP have been achieved primarily thanks to the manifested political will and extremely stimulating role played by the management of the Ministry of Defence, as well as the established cooperation and confidence built between all stakeholders involved in the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the country, Western Balkans and beyond, a large number of educations and trainings in the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces and also published media contents that accompanied the implementation of this plan significantly contributing to raising awareness of the role of women not only in the armed forces but also in the entire society.

Support was provided by international organizations, most significantly by the UNDP/ SEESAC, UN Women and the OSCE. Without this, undeniably, it would not have been possible to achieve such results.

## **2.1 Institutional bodies and gender equality mechanisms for the implementation of the NAP**

One of specific things about the NAP of the Republic of Serbia, in contrast to national action plans for the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 in other countries, is the establishment of new inter-related institutional bodies and gender equality mechanisms for the implementation of the NAP.

In this context, ensuring the regular functioning of some of the newly-established Government bodies was a major challenge, especially for the Ministry of Defence, whose role and involvement in this regard was of great importance.

The most important institutional bodies and mechanisms for gender equality formed in accordance with NAP in the Republic of Serbia were:

**Political Council for the implementation of the NAP** (hereinafter: the Political Council) was formed in 2011 as the government's institutional body for gender equality, with a mandate to consider issues related to the implementation of the NAP. Accordingly, it provided guidance and recommendations to the Multisectoral Coordination Body (hereinafter: MCB) and discussed its reports, assessed progress, submitted regular reports to the Government and the supervisory body for the implementation of the NAP of the National Assembly, and participated in conferences of international importance regarding Resolution 1325.

Twelve representatives from the Government Ministries/Departments/Agencies responsible for the implementation of the NAP in the security sector were appointed as members of the Political Council. Later, the composition of this body was expanded so that it included members from all Government Ministries, the Security-Information Agency, the Office for Kosovo and Metohija, the Office for European Integration, the Office for Cooperation with Civil Society Organizations and the Office for Human and Minority Rights of the Government. The Ministry of Defence was tasked with providing expert, administrative and technical support to this body, and, regardless of occasional changes in the membership, the President of the Political Council was from the Ministry of Defence throughout its operation<sup>5</sup>.

In addition to the members, the Political Council's sessions are, by invitation, attended by representatives of the CPE, the Ombudsman, the Commission for monitoring the implementation of the NAP of the National Assembly and others.

Three working groups were established within the Political Council: (1) Working Group of the Political Council for improving the implementation of the NAP; (2) Working Group of the Political Council for directing the work of the MCB; and (3) Working Group of the Political Council for creating the political preconditions for achieving the goals envisaged by the NAP, which, in meetings of the Political Council, discussed issues for which they are responsible and gave their recommendations and proposals for improving the implementation of the NAP in the Republic of Serbia.

In accordance with its role, the Political Council has also taken the necessary measures for the aim of developing a new NAP.

**The Multisectoral Coordination Body for the implementation of the NAP** was also formed in 2011, with the main task of performing operational tasks related to the achievement of the objectives and implementation of tasks foreseen in the NAP. The Ministry of the Interior provides expert, administrative and technical support

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<sup>5</sup> *At a meeting of the Government on 18 June 2013, Zoran Đorđević, then State Secretary in the Ministry of Defence, and now the Defence Minister, was appointed President of the Political Council.*

to this institutional body, and its chairman is from the Ministry of Interior. The MCB has achieved significant results in establishing cooperation with international organizations, civil society organizations and other institutions in the Republic of Serbia, in order to achieve the objectives of the NAP. Also, this body conducted, in 2015, an internal evaluation of the implementation of the NAP, which served not only as an indicator of the effectiveness of this document, but also as useful guidance in determining the content of the new draft of the NAP.

Both of these institutional bodies of the Government delivered reports on their work to the responsible authorities.

For democratic control over the implementation of the NAP a **Commission for monitoring the implementation of the NAP** was established, as a body of the National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia. This institutional body works with civil society organizations which carry out independent monitoring and reporting of the implementation of the NAP, as well as with international organizations that have expressed an interest in supporting its implementation. The President of the Commission, on invitation, attends meetings of the Political Council of the Government, to better understand the activities and results of the NAP's implementation.

**Analytical groups or research teams** are institutional bodies envisaged by the NAP, which are formed in the respective Ministries/Departments/Agencies to monitor the implementation of the NAP, establishing statistics and other indicators of the effects of its implementation and reporting. The analytical group of the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces for analyzing the implementation of the NAP<sup>6</sup> (hereinafter: Analytical Group of the MoD and SAF) was the first such group formed in the security sector in the Republic of Serbia. The members of this group were the organizers and participants in a large number of activities planned for the purpose of the implementation of the NAP in the organizational units of the MoD and SAF. In cooperation with the UN Women, several joint education courses and training for members of analytical groups and research teams from the whole security sector were conducted. At these events they exchanged experiences and presented practical methods and techniques for gender analysis, and further horizontal networking and information exchange was initiated.

A **“trustworthy person”** is a specific mechanism for gender equality established to provide primary collegial assistance to employees in terms of gender equality in the relevant Ministries/Departments/Agencies<sup>7</sup>. In the MoD and SAF this mechanism was established in 2013, when the Minister of Defence approved the instruction

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<sup>6</sup> Consists of 22 members from 17 organizational units of the Ministry of Defence and Serbian Armed Forces (19 women and 3 men).

<sup>7</sup> At the time of adopting the NAP, this mechanism was established only in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, within the project “Colleague for Support”. In establishing the mechanism «persons of trust», great support was given by UN Women.

on the selection and function of the “person of trust”<sup>8</sup>, after which the selection of “trustworthy people” in the organizational units of MoD and SAF was conducted. Coordinating the work of this mechanism of gender equality in the MoD and SAF is the responsibility of the Gender Equality Advisor of the Minister of Defence.

Appropriate training for the elected “trustworthy person” and the sustainability of this mechanism of gender equality was implemented in cooperation with the UN Women. The “Handbook for a Trustworthy person” was prepared, published, and distributed to all the “trustworthy persons” in the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces.

**The person in charge of coordinating the activities of the NAP** is a mechanism for the introduction of a gender perspective in policies and programmes in the relevant Ministries/Departments/Agencies. This mechanism was established in the Ministry of Defence in 2012, by the decision of the Minister of Defence, who selects the authorized person who, in addition to her/his regular duties, has responsibility for enhancing and promoting gender equality.

Although the introduction of a mechanism of **Gender Advisor in civil and military missions**, in accordance with the standards and experience of the EU and NATO (PfP), was provided by the NAP, this mechanism has not been established, since the Republic of Serbia does not participate in civilian and military missions with national contingents.

**Independent monitoring** of the implementation of the NAP during the whole period of its implementation was carried out by the Commissioner for Protection of Equality, the Ombudsman, the Commissioner for Information of Public Importance, the media, civil society organizations and the public.

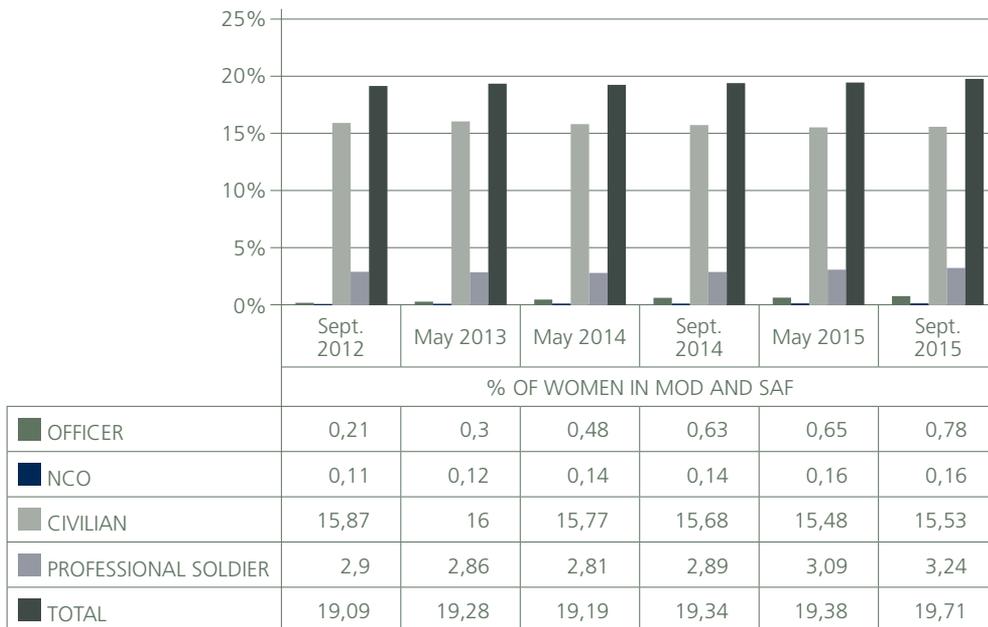
## 2.2 Representation of women in the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces

Bearing in mind that the right to equal representation of women and men, in the context of their impact on peace and security, is not fully realized in practice in the Republic of Serbia, this issue was given special attention and significance in the NAP. For the purpose of monitoring trends in the representation of women in the MoD and SAF, a gender analysis, based on collected data, has been carried out every six months.

Monitoring and comparing the results of the gender analysis, beginning with the first analysis conducted by the Analytical Group of the MoD and SAF in September 2011 and continuing to data gathered in September 2015, indicates an overall small increase in the number and percentage of women employed in the MoD and SAF (Šaranović, Kilibarada, 2012). The increase in representation of women has occurred primarily in the categories of officers and professional soldiers. (Table 1).

<sup>8</sup> „Службени војни лист“ број 25/13.

**Table 1:**  
Overview of the representation of women in the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces



Regarding the trend of constant decrease in the representation of women in the category of civilians in the period 2010-2015, and a simultaneous increase in number of women in the categories of professional military personnel and professional soldiers, it should be noted that the reduction in the number of women in the civilian category was caused by retirement or finding jobs outside the MoD and SAF.

At the same time, there was a positive trend of gradual increase in the representation of women in the Serbian Armed Forces from 8.1% in 2010 to 9.01% in 2015.

With regard to the representation of women in decision-making, the majority of women employed in the MoD and SAF are not in management or command posts (Šaranović, Višacki, Stojanović, 2015). It can be expected that over time the representation of women in decision-making will grow, especially in the category of professional military personnel, from which officers are assigned to command posts in the Serbian Armed Forces. The relatively small proportion of women in managerial/command functions is a direct consequence of the insufficient number of women in the category of senior officers with rank, the necessary qualifications, or years of service in the SAF for appointment to higher positions.

Women employed in the MoD and SAF, formally, on equal conditions as men, are entitled to apply for work in military-diplomatic missions abroad (which until recently was not the case), and to be involved at all positions in multinational operations.

The representation of women, mainly medical personnel but also officers and professional soldiers, in multinational operations is about 10%. Measures are in place intended to increase the representation of women in UN-mandated multinational operations, and training in gender-sensitive issues for participants in multinational operations.

According to data from September 2015, there were 17.1% female cadets (in relation to the total number of male and female cadets) in basic studies at the Military Academy. In the 2014/2015 academic year, 35 girls graduated, and the three most successful graduates from Class 136 were girls. The number of girls interested in enrolling in the Military Academy is growing every year.

After selection, 22 girls were admitted in the first year of Military High School.

### **2.3 Education and training in the context of the NAP's implementation**

Within the integration of a gender perspective in the defence system reform, with the aim of overcoming gender stereotypes, the curricula of military-educational institutions at all levels (Military High School, Military Academy, Command Staff and General Staff College) have been adapted, through the inclusion of topics that deal with gender equality issues.

Also, in the previous period, in the MoD and SAF, many lectures, courses, seminars, conferences, round tables, expert consultations and discussions on gender equality were held with the participation of a large number of representatives from different organizational units of the MoD and SAF, with the support of international organizations. MoD and SAF members participated in numerous conferences, symposia, seminars, courses and round tables organized by governmental institutions of the Republic of Serbia or by NGOs.

Members of the Analytical Group of the MoD and SAF have had regular training through the organization of seminars on analytical methods and techniques.

Considerable attention has been given to the training of women in the SAF, and full equality in terms of choosing job posts and training has been ensured. Through the introduction of voluntary military service, men and women are fully equal in terms of initial training duties. Training is carried out in training centres according to a unique training programme. Differences only exist in the standards for checking physical fitness, which are customized based on gender.

Training of officers and future peacekeepers on gender issues has been carried out in accordance with training material for UN peacekeeping missions<sup>9</sup>, the UN Directive<sup>10</sup>, a publication of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations - DPKO<sup>11</sup>,

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<sup>9</sup> *Core Pre-deployment Training Material*

<sup>10</sup> *Gender Equality in Peacekeeping Operations*

<sup>11</sup> *Gender Resource Package for Peacekeeping Operations*

a set of manuals on gender issues<sup>12</sup> and other relevant documents such as NATO doctrine<sup>13</sup>, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women<sup>14</sup>, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women<sup>15</sup>, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights<sup>16</sup>, the Council of Europe Declaration on Equality between Women and Men as a Fundamental Criterion of Democracy, and the Handbook on CSDP, Gender and SSR, EU SSR, European Security and the Defence College.

In addition to the standards contained in the “United Nations Basic Standardized Module for Training for Multinational Operations”, similar standards of the EU, OSCE and the Council of Europe, as well as the standards of behaviour in peace and war against civilians (women, children and the elderly), prisoners, etc. arising out of the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols and other international political and legal documents signed and ratified by the Republic of Serbia, are also respected.

## 2.4 Media support for the objectives of the NAP

By informing the public about the activities of the MoD and SAF since the adoption of the NAP in 2010, the Public Relations Department of the MoD has contributed significantly to raising awareness in the general public about the importance of integrating a gender perspective in the defence system, and highlighted the importance of the implementation of the NAP.

The following information campaigns were particularly praised by the domestic and foreign public as examples of good practice:

- 1) A campaign for the enrollment of girls at the Military Academy and the Military Medical Academy;
- 2) The campaign “Be a Professional” created for the promotion of the military profession and admission of candidates (men and women) to professional military service in the SAF;
- 3) A campaign dedicated to the completion of education of cadets at the Military Academy, in which special attention was devoted to the completion of the first generation of cadet education (school enrollment 2007/2008), ie. promoting women officers.

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<sup>12</sup> *Set priručnika o rodnim pitanjima i reformi sektora bezbjednosti preveden za upotrebu u regionu Zapadnog Balkana – DCAF*

<sup>13</sup> *Allied Joint Doctrine For Non-article 5, Crisis Response Operations AJP-3.4 (a)*

<sup>14</sup> *Службени лист СФРЈ – Међународни уговори, број 11/81*

<sup>15</sup> *Службени лист СРЈ – Међународни уговори, број 13/02*

<sup>16</sup> *Службени лист СРЈ – Међународни уговори, број 4/01*

Through the websites of the MoD and SAF, as well as the magazine “Defence”, MoD and SAF members and the general public were regularly informed about the activities of the institutional bodies and gender equality mechanisms for the implementation of the NAP in the MoD and SAF, and about the contribution of women to the defence system, as well as about the problems of gender equality. The most common topic on women is the place of women in the SAF. The aforementioned magazine has published two special contributions about women since the adoption of the NAP.

News that mentions or affects women has regularly been published on the MoD and SAF websites; on the latter there is a separate webpage called “Women in the SAF” where female professional military personnel and their duties are presented.

## **2.5 Cooperation with international subjects**

In pursuit of the implementation of the NAP, the MoD has achieved significant cooperation with international organizations such as the UNDP/SEESAC, the OSCE Mission to Serbia, and UN Women, as well as bilateral cooperation with countries that have expressed an interest in supporting the activities of the MoD in this area.

The OSCE Mission to Serbia financed the printing of 500 copies of the NAP, in Serbian and English, within the framework of the project “Consolidation of the Democratization Process in the Security Sector in Serbia”, and organized a cycle of three seminars on the theme: “Gender Mainstreaming in Security Sector Reform”, which was attended by representatives of the MoD and SAF.

On the basis of the consent of the Minister of Defence, the MoD has, since 2012, been included in the regional project “Support to Mainstreaming of Gender Equality in Security Sector Reform in the Western Balkans”, implemented by UNDP/SEESAC in order to integrate the issue of gender equality in the process of security sector reform, thus contributing to the greater efficiency of the security sector.

The MoD, in cooperation with UNDP/SEESAC, organized the first regional meeting in Belgrade in March 2012, where a joint statement on cooperation to strengthen the process of security sector reform in the Western Balkans by integration of a gender perspective in policies and institutions of security and defence was signed by representatives of the Ministries of Defence of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Macedonia and Serbia. Following that, there were further regional meetings and numerous activities at home and abroad, which were attended by representatives of the MoD and SAF. UNDP/SEESAC planned to complete this project by the end of June 2016.

Representatives of the MoD and SAF participate in meetings of the NATO Committee on Gender Perspectives, which is annually organized in Brussels, Belgium.

The implementation of activities through the exchange of experiences, expert talks and lectures on gender issues is planned and implemented in the framework of bilateral military cooperation.

### 3 DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN (2016-2020) – CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

After five years of the implementation of the NAP (2010-2015), it is evident that gender equality is one of the issues which has been given deserved attention in the Republic of Serbia, especially in the security sector, including the Ministry of Defence and the Serbian Armed Forces. Significant progress has been made in achieving the intended objectives of the NAP, especially in institutional development, increasing the representation and decision-making of women in the security sector, increasing their participation in international cooperation activities and multinational operations, improving the legal prerequisites for the protection of women, and media coverage of the implementation of activities included in this plan, as well as in establishing cooperation between state administration, civil society organizations and international organizations on the implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325 in the Republic of Serbia.

For the purpose of more a comprehensive and objective review of the results of the implementation of the NAP, as well as to gain insight into the proposals for improving the implementation of Resolution 1325 in the Republic of Serbia in the future, an event entitled “Dialogue of the Political Council and institutional bodies and gender equality mechanisms for the implementation of the NAP for the UNSC R 1325 – Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia (2010-2015)”, with representatives of civil society organizations, academia and media, was organized by the Political Council of the Government on May 28, 2015, in Belgrade.

At the event, which was attended by a total of 93 people<sup>17</sup>, of whom 47 were representatives of civil society organizations from the entire territory of the Republic of Serbia, it was concluded that the implementation of the NAP needs to be continued in the next medium term (2016-2020). It was expressed that it is necessary to evaluate the results of the recent implementation of the NAP and to revise its contents. Also, it was concluded that the future implementation of the NAP should be directed at the local level.

The internal evaluation was performed by MCB, and the external by the Institute for Inclusive Security from Washington (USA) and the OSCE Mission to Serbia. Conclusions made on the basis of the results of all the analyzes which were carried out served as the basis for the development of a new medium-term action plan. One of the conclusions referred to the functioning of institutional bodies and gender equality mechanisms. Apart from the fact that their establishment enabled the

<sup>17</sup> *Representatives of: institutional bodies and gender equality mechanisms for the implementation of the NAP, Coordination Body of the Government for gender equality and relevant Committees of the National Assembly, Commission for Monitoring the Implementation of the NAP within the National Assembly, mechanisms for independent monitoring of the implementation of the NAP, such as the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, the Ombudsman, the Commissioner for Public Information and Personal Data Protection, civil society organizations, academia and media, representatives from UNDP/SEESAC, OSCE Mission to Serbia, UN Women and NATO.*

systematic and formalized operation of the policy-makers and practitioners with sufficient knowledge of the problem, it was pointed out that, due to the large number of participants, the channels of communication are not always sufficiently clear. It was pointed out that it was necessary to further invest in the knowledge and skills of the personnel involved, and also to simplify the roles of the different institutional bodies and gender equality mechanisms in the security sector and establish a network between them.

The existence of political will and support was stressed in the results of the conducted evaluations, but at the same time, because of frequent shifts of personnel at the highest levels of decision-making, the need for continuous implementation of activities aimed at raising awareness of the importance of preserving the essential support of policy makers with regard to gender equality in the defence system was pointed out. It was concluded that there is awareness of the need for gender budgeting, but also that in the analyzed period funds that could have been used to implement more demanding objectives are not allocated.

Also, it was concluded that a single and generally accepted list containing sufficient minimum of indicators should be made, by selecting those that are reflecting targeted interventions and avoiding indicators that don't have essential and instrumental role.

As already mentioned, activities aimed at increasing the representation of women in the defence system have been successfully implemented; however, a simple increase in the number of women does not automatically imply greater equality. The challenge is to design activities in such a way as to form an organizational culture in the defence system which will be equally supportive, in every respect, to all its members on their career path to reach the highest positions.

By the Decision of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, on 25 December 2015, the Working Group for the development of the National Action Plan for the implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 – Women, Peace and Security in the Republic of Serbia (2016-2020) (hereinafter referred to as the Working Group), was established, and its composition and tasks were determined. Responsibility for providing expert, administrative and technical support to the Working Group was given to the Ministry of Defence.

During the development and implementation of the previous NAP, the Republic of Serbia cooperated with the OSCE Mission to Serbia, which again expressed its readiness to provide appropriate support to the Working Group of the Government and the NGO sector during drafting of the NAP, in organization of workshops for the Working Group, and also to support a wider consultation process on the content of the document in the local community, with the involvement of all the relevant stakeholders in society.

**Conclusion** The development and implementation of the NAP represents a significant contribution to the reform of the defence system, as well as the national security system as a whole in the Republic of Serbia; above all by the inclusion of international standards, primarily UN, EU, NATO and OSCE standards, into national legislation and strategic and planning documents.

In this regard, the ability to better and more efficiently use human resources for an effective response to crisis and post-crisis situations, and for cooperation with the NGO sector towards improving the place and role of women in society, has been recognized.

The result of such an open approach is joint action of representatives of state institutions, NGOs and international organizations, thanks to which the draft of the NAP was developed and adopted in less than six months, and effectively implemented as of 2011.

The currently achieved state and knowledge of certain principles which govern the process of improving gender equality should be used as a platform for the next breakthroughs that lay ahead of us. Certainly the biggest step forward is the development and adoption of the NAP for the period 2016-2020. In this process, the Ministry of Defence was again assigned to leadership positions and a coordinating role of all stakeholders involved in the process of its development. The Government Working Group for the development of the NAP 2016-2020 is currently working on a customized and focused NAP that will reflect national priorities as well as international commitments; streamlining the number of chapters; defining clear, measurable and carefully selected objectives and dynamics of the implementation which will take into account modern standards in this area to an extent that does not contradict the objective possibilities; the selection of indicators and monitoring methods that are realistic and that can be implemented; the establishment of gender budgeting and a balance between the particular set of resources and funding through regular budget lines; and defining responsibilities, monitoring and evaluation of progress and challenges.

The implementation of the NAP, as before, contributes to increasing the overall reputation of the Republic of Serbia in the international community and the Ministry of Defence in the domestic and foreign public.

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