

UNIVERSITY OF TARTU

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European Union

European Regional
Development Fund

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**The UN's Women, Peace and Security Framework in the context of the 2012-2016
Colombian peace process**

A window of opportunity for enhancing women's rights?

MA Thesis

Supervisor: Prof. Eiki Berg

Tartu 2017

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THE UN'S WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY FRAMEWORK IN THE CONTEXT OF THE 2012 – 2016 COLOMBIAN PEACE PROCESS

A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE WOMEN'S RIGHTS?

Hannah Schaper

Abstract

In order to tackle the historical omission of women's contributions to processes of conflict resolution, the United Nations Security Council has been following a broad agenda on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) since the year 2000 to increase women's participation in official peace negotiations and peace agreement implementation processes. The peace talks between the Colombian government under President Juan Manuel Santos and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), taking place in Havana from 2012-2016 officially brought an end to one of the world's longest-running conflicts. Lauded by the international community due to its sensitivity with regard to women's and victim's rights, the latest Colombian peace process is portrayed as a potential role model for future peacebuilding initiatives. With the UN acting as a facilitator of the Havana peace talks, this thesis aims to deepen our understanding of the WPS framework's effectiveness. Through an analysis of the final peace accord as well as a number of Transitional Justice and Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration measures surrounding the peace process, this thesis measures compliance between the process and the goals promoted by the UN's WPS agenda. Additionally, interviews conducted during a field trip to Bogotá, are used to complement this analysis. The findings suggest that the WPS framework is reflected in the current Colombian peace process both with regard to the framework's aims and its shortcomings. Attention is dedicated to the active 'participation' of women in matters of constructing a Colombian post-conflict society, and to measures of 'relief and recovery', with regard to victims of conflict-related sexual violence in particular. Strategies of 'prevention' and 'protection' of the rights and bodies of women as envisioned by the WPS agenda fall short in the Colombian context to the extent that despite the fact that a number of laws exists, their implementation, however, remains flawed.

Key words: Colombia, peace process, FARC, women, UN, UNSCR 1325

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1. Introduction

“In failing to include women and girls in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes, we are not only failing women and girls. We are failing the world.” (Former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon, 2016)

The internal armed conflict taking place in Colombia between the *Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia* (FARC), the armed revolutionary forces of Colombia, and the country’s government is one of the longest-running conflicts in the world and has been fought over the past 52 years. Hopes have been raised that fighting has come to an end with the signing of the final peace accord by FARC leader Rodrigo Londoño and current Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos on November 24th. The signing of this peace accord had been preceded by four years of negotiations in Havana, lasting from 2012 until 2016; covering various issues ranging from urgently needed land reforms to measures to put an end to illegal drug trafficking. Iván Márquez, the FARC’s top negotiator, states that “The battle with weapons ends and the battle of ideas begins” (Brodzinsky, 2016) with Londoño expressing the wish that “the word may be the only weapon of the Colombians”¹ (Cárdenas Herrera, 2016).

The conflict in Colombia has been characterised by high levels of complexity and gross human rights violations such as kidnapping, torture, massacres, sexual violence, mutilation, forceful recruitment, and making people ‘disappear’; which were committed by all parties involved in the country’s internal armed struggle. The Colombian conflict can be characterised by low intensity and long duration and cannot be reduced to a single cause such as a dispute over religion or ethnicity. Consequently, it is more appropriate to speak of the Colombian peace *processes* running parallel to each other and tending to different conflict causes respectively. More than five decades of conflict has taken its toll on the country: 6.3 million internally displaced persons or *desterrados* until 2015, more than 220 000 fatalities (80 per cent of which were civilians), 25 000 - 60 000 *desaparecidos* or ‘disappeared’ persons, the number of landmine victims being the third highest worldwide, 5000 extrajudicial killings carried out by military forces throughout the country and an overall 7.6 million people out of a population of 49 million who have registered themselves as victims (Maldonado, 2017,

¹ “Que la palabra sea la única arma de los colombianos”

McFee, 2016, Kurtenbach & Lutscher, 2015). Among the violent military clashes between the guerrilla, paramilitary, and state forces, the rural population living in remote areas characterised by a lack of state control, have borne the lion's share of suffering inflicted on the civilian population. The war in Colombia, consequently, has been described as a "war through third parties, where opponents do not confront each other directly but instead attack the real or supposed social base of the enemy" (González, 2004, p.15).

The role violence plays in the Colombian conflict therefore cannot be overstated and the current conflict cannot be understood without establishing the link between violence and economic interests "The economic and political elites have used displacement to 'homogenise' the population in a given area [...] People are not displaced 'by violence'; rather, violence is the tool used to expel the population. The true causes for displacement are hidden behind the violence" including "control of production and extraction activities (of natural resources and minerals), mega-projects, expanding of stockbreeding estates and agricultural industry, control of illicit crops etc." (González Bustilo as cited in Selfa, 2005, pp.20-1). Adapting Von Clausewitz he concludes that in the Colombian context "war is the continuation of economics through other means" (ibid). In this context, however, it is important to note that gender often tends to be rendered invisible in statistics. Not to gender-disaggregate data makes "inequities invisible. Once you make inequities visible, you are also likely to make visible the power dynamics that create those inequities [...] Incuriositiy is a political act" (Enloe, C. as cited in Puechguirbal, 2010, p.174).

Breaking these figures up into the different categories of men and women exemplifies how the conflict has a varying impact on the sexes. Whereas 95 per cent of persons killed and injured by landmines during the fighting were male, out of the internally displaced people 78 per cent were women and children, with women suffering significantly more from conflict-related sexual violence (Bouvier, 2016). A balance between finding peace and satisfyingly addressing transitional justice (TJ) demands of the victims needs to be struck. Colombian President Santos (2014) notes that "many will wonder: why is this [peace in Colombia] important for Europe or for the world?" He goes on to answer by pointing out that Colombia "will be the first country to negotiate the end of an armed conflict within the Rome Statute. What happens in

Colombia will have profound implications for future conflict resolution anywhere in the world” (Santos, 2014).

Despite the fact that during the fighting women suffer disproportionately from displacement and sexual violence, conflict might also constitute a window of opportunity for them to break free from traditional societal constraints based on gendered power hierarchies when traditional notions of masculinity and femininity are being overturned on the battlefield as well as behind the front lines. The core difficulty then lies with preserving these accomplishments once the fighting has come to an end. The women caught up in the war between Colombia’s government and armed insurgents belonged both to the most marginalised groups and featured highly among the fighters themselves. The FARC is composed of about 8,000 combatants out of whom an estimated 40 percent are female (O’Neill, 2015). Moreover, as the FARC fights under a banner of social justice, issues of gender equality have formed an integral part of the armed group’s strategy; albeit a contradictory one. While on the one hand openly opposing, for instance domestic violence and abuse of women and children (with the penalty for raping someone in FARC controlled territory being execution), the group on the other hand also profited from a strong presence of machismo in Colombian society, targeting especially young and vulnerable girls in their recruitment process (Mazurana & Eckerbom Cole, 2013). In his speech to the Colombian people, Londoño explicitly mentioned women’s organisations as playing an integral part in the peace process and acknowledged the different forms their political activism takes (TV Perú Noticias, 2016). With plans of transforming the FARC into a political party in the post-conflict phase, it remains to be seen to what extent this party could tap the potential of women’s issues and rights in order to gain electoral support.

Historically, women have either been neglected in peace processes and the drafting of peace agreements or their role has been reduced to the one of the victims in need of protection. In order to tackle this simplification of the contributions women are making to conflicts and conflict resolution and to recognise them as essential agents in creating a lasting peace, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) has passed several Resolutions since the year 2000. Ever since UNSC Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace and Security of the year 2000, international actors’ attention has been drawn to the fact that conflict has a different impact on women than men.

Acknowledging that women, and their unique experiences as well as the contributions they could make to conflict resolution, had largely been neglected over the past, the resolution is considered a milestone with regard to promoting women's rights. Together with its seven follow ups it constitutes what is termed the UN's Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) framework aimed at supporting women in conflict and peace building processes. These resolutions, while heralded as milestones, have also evoked substantial criticism mainly with regard to their effectiveness. Problems with the successful implementation of Resolution 1325 entail "the lack of political commitment at the highest levels; the lack of strong systematic empirical evidence to infuse policy and inform best practices; and the lack of integration into mainstream international relations and security studies" (de Jonge Oudraat, 2013, p.615).

Currently, the UN is present on the ground in Colombia with 509 members to a ceasefire observer mission in what former UN Secretary General (UNSG) Ban Ki Moon has termed an "unprecedented experience" (UN News Centre, 2016) as both main parties to the conflict jointly requested UN support in monitoring the disarmament process. With regard to the role women play in the Colombian peace process, the former UNSG, moreover, highlighted the active participation of women in the Colombian peace talks resulting in a final peace accord sensitive to issues of gender equality visualising "a peace which guarantees the participation of women in a future in which the possibility for everyone to participate in politics exists and in which there will be no space for politics based on violence"² (El Tiempo, 2016, UN Mission 2016). Moreover, upon the request of Colombian Foreign Minister María Ángela Holguín, the UNSC agreed to continue the UN's work in Colombia in the form of a new mission after the current one has fulfilled its mandate of observing the disarmament of the FARC. This new mission will consist of civilian observers only and will see a reduction in numbers; its purpose the facilitation of the successful implementation of the peace accord (Redacción Paz, 2017).

However, the need to further scrutinise the WPS framework's shortcomings persists in order to determine to what extent it can be considered a useful tool to enhance women's participation in situations of conflict and conflict resolution. This need relates not only to the practical side of the UN framework's implementation

² "una paz que valora y garantiza la participación de la mujer en un futuro en el que existe la posibilidad de que todos puedan participar en política, ya que no habrá espacio para una política basada en violencia"

process but also requires to take a closer look at the lack of scholarly attention dedicated to issues of gender in the fields of International Relations in general and of conflict studies in particular. The end of the armed conflict between the Colombian state and the FARC marks a historic moment. Moreover, the high share of women involved in the conflict as fighters and victims as well as their contributions to the peace process are remarkable, making the Colombian case a relevant and up-to-date topic to study. As stated by President Santos, the Colombian example will have an impact on future peace processes in other parts of the world, in which the UN is also likely to be involved. As enhancing women's participation in every stage of the peace process is one of the UN's key priorities, the need to understand in more detail how the WPS agenda works 'on the ground' with regard to its implementation is crucial. Out of these needs the following research question evolves: to what extent does the Colombian peace process reflect the UN's WPS framework?

The main argument of this thesis is that the Colombian case can be considered relatively successful in including women in the peace process as envisioned in the WPS framework. The potential and importance of their active involvement in the peace process has been acknowledged at the highest political level and their demands to a noteworthy extent included in the final peace accord between the Santos government and the FARC. Nonetheless, this thesis also comes to the conclusion that this high level involvement of women in the official peace talks can be considered largely the result of external pressure exercised by the UN on the negotiating parties. An additional finding of this thesis is that the attention dedicated to different parts of the WPS framework is unbalanced and while certain areas are covered to an acceptable extent, others remain more or less neglected. Finally, the significant gap between theory and practice complicate the successful implementation of the WPS agenda in Colombia.

The structure of this thesis proceeds as follows. The first part sets out the theoretical background against which the single case study of the current Colombian peace process is analysed. It reviews the literature on women in conflict and further discusses the concepts of 'women' and 'post-conflict' thereby setting the scene to situate UN-led efforts to introduce a gender perspective to conflict resolution and peace building. Subsequently, the next section analyses in greater detail the eight UNSCRs passed in the time period from 2000 to 2015. The resulting WPS framework constitutes

the backdrop against which the different components of the current Colombian peace process are analysed. The fourth section gives a brief historical overview of the Colombian internal armed struggle and the various actors involved in the conflict. The fifth section draws upon a set of indicators directly derived from the eight WPS Resolutions and aims to find out to what extent the final peace accord between the Santos government and the FARC as well as some of the resulting Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (DDR) and TJ measures reflect the aims envisioned in the UN's WPS framework. The final section concludes with a summary of the findings.

2. Theoretical Framework: Women in Conflict and Peace Building

2.1 Women and Conflict: The Gendered Nature of Peace Building Processes

The theoretical background for this thesis lies with a feminist approach to conflict theory which serves to investigate on the issue of women's roles in conflict settlement and resolution. Martha Thompson (2006) finds that the issue of gender is not linked explicitly enough to current debates of conflict theory. She states that "new theories of conflict have so far failed to bring to light the different ways in which such conflict affects the roles of men and women, or the relationships and power balance between them" (p.344). The contribution of feminist approaches to the field of International Relations (IR) is to introduce a gender perspective to the discipline. This serves to critically analyse how different key concepts used in IR theories, such as the 'state' or 'sovereignty', are themselves gendered, as well as how this "gendering of concepts" (Smith & Owens, 2008, p.181) has a different effect on women than on men. These approaches look at "how gender both affects world politics and is an effect of world politics" (ibid). Reimagining security from a feminist perspective, as envisioned by Ann Tickner (1992), therefore entails bringing to light "the hierarchical social relations, including gender relations, that have been hidden by realism's frequently depersonalised discourse" in order to account for "the multiple experiences of both women and men" (p.66).

The term gender therefore can be understood as the "social construction of difference between 'men' and 'women'" (Smith & Owens, 2008, p.181). The term 'sex' usually refers to the biological differences between people thereby categorising them either as men or women. Gender, on the other hand, attaches to this differentiation based on biological factors, certain expectations on how an individual identified as a man or woman is supposed to behave: "Gender can be defined as a set of socially constructed ideas about what men and women ought to be [...] Gender characteristics are cultural creations passed on through socialisation" (Detraz, 2012, p.3). This construction of difference happens in everyday interactions and social processes and constitutes an underlying cause of inequality since "as long as women and men see themselves as different kinds of people, then women will be unlikely to compare their life options to those of men. Therein lies the power of gender" (Risman, 2004, p.432). Gender, according to Barbara Risman (2004), can be portrayed as a "social structure" to

be situated at the same level of analysis as politics and economics; fields equally characterised by structures. Risman justifies this argument by explaining that “race, gender, and sexuality are equally fundamental to human societies as the economy and the polity” as they are “fundamentally embedded throughout social life, at the level of individual identities, cultural expectations embedded into interactions, and institutional opportunities and constraints” (p.444). Nonetheless, the use of the term ‘gender’ is at times ambiguous and too often policy makers relate it to women’s issues only instead of bearing in mind the relational nature of the concept. Her observation of intersectionality, moreover, is crucial. How inequalities and gender identities are constructed varies considerably over time and space. Gender therefore always needs to be analysed in relation to other inequalities and cannot be examined in isolation as “to do otherwise presumes the whiteness of women, the maleness of people of colour, and the heterosexuality of everyone” (p.442).

Similar to other critical studies, feminist analyses of world politics often carry with them a call for action, challenging what is being overlooked or taken for granted, and ultimately transforming society by exposing how “gender is, at its heart, a structural power relation” which “rests upon a central set of distinctions between different categories of people, valorises some over others, and organises access to resources, rights, responsibilities, authority, and life options, along the lines demarcating these groups” (Cohn, 2013, p.4). Gender inequality thereby is anchored in these power relations and can be understood as an uneven access to power and resources which favours men over women. Consequently, “academic feminism has ethical responsibilities that reflect an ontological understanding of scholarship as *for* social change” (Ackerly, 2008, p.30, original emphasis). In this context, gender mainstreaming can be understood as the official strategy to achieve gender equality. There needs to be, nevertheless, a distinction made between gender balancing and gender mainstreaming approaches to policy making. While the former aims at “increasing the number of women in a given role, in a way that approaches parity”, the latter follows the idea of “integrating a gender perspective into the activities of an organisation, thereby institutionalizing an understanding of the myriad ways in which gender matters” (Kirby & Shepherd, 2016, p.376).

Moreover, women might face opposition to their active participation in peace

processes. The question of why women should be represented at the negotiation table at all if they neither constituted the majority of the soldiers nor had an official political presence to begin with during pre-conflict times might be raised. Furthermore, once accepted to the negotiation table, women, see their capabilities to contribute effectively questioned disproportionately when compared to their male counterparts. Women's participation is often considered unnecessary or unnatural either due to the fact that it runs against so called traditional values of their respective society or, on the contrary, women's interests are declared not differing from the male ones and therefore already adequately represented by male negotiators. However, "if peace agreements are written, accorded, and implemented solely by men, the gender dynamics that were present throughout the armed conflict will remain unquestioned and intact" (de Alwis, Mertus & Sajjad, 2013, p.192).

There always needs to be an explanation as to why to include women. Their eventual inclusion then tends to be justified either because of their supposedly more peaceful nature as mothers and caretakers, or because they have been disproportionately victimised by the war and therefore require special protection. Without downplaying the substantial suffering endured by women in conflict-torn societies, this thesis follows the notion, according to which, "Women should participate in peace processes not because they are innately peaceful or they have been victimized by wars, but because they are themselves political subjects with rights" (ibid). Additionally, the stronger the influence of women on the process, the more likely it is for an agreement to be reached and the following peace accord to be implemented (Paffenholz et al, 2016). The influence exercised by women on the process either as individuals or acting collectively in women's organisations, can be defined as "their ability to push for their preferences before, during, and after the negotiation process" with their preferences encompassing topics as varied as "bringing issues onto the negotiation and implementation agenda; putting issues into the substance of the agreement; taking part in the implementation of an agreement; the demand for negotiations to begin, for negotiations to resume, or for an agreement to be signed" (Paffenholz et al, 2016, p.16). In this context, "peace processes that included women as witnesses, signatories, mediators, and/or negotiators demonstrated a 20 per cent increase in the probability of a peace agreement lasting at least two years" (UN Global Study, 2015, p.41). Moreover, it is crucial to involve

women as early as possible in the peace process as this significantly facilitates their further involvement in the negotiations and therefore increases the likelihood for them to make their demands heard throughout the talks.

Apart from criticising the manner in which matters of advancing women's rights and gender equality are addressed in international peacemaking operations and liberal peace building efforts, some authors (Hudson, 2012, Aroussi, 2011, Cook, 2009, Cockburn, 2007) also seek to draw attention to the anti-militarist endeavours of the feminist project. They question a militarist approach all together by pointing out its inherently male structures and the resulting power imbalances. Granting women a voice in peace negotiations or participation in designing the institutions of their country's post-conflict society "does nothing to address war as an institution in itself" nor does it "challenge the dominant rules and practices of international institutions" (Hudson, 2012, p.450). This also affects many of the proposals with regard to conflict-related sexual violence. In this context, co-drafter of UNSCR 1325 Cora Weiss (2011) notes that "We cannot pluck rape out of war and let the war go on. We must not make war safe for women. It is time to abolish war". These authors conclude that little has been achieved in order to tangibly improve women's daily struggles living in post-conflict societies. Furthermore, attention needs to be drawn to the concepts of 'women' and 'post-conflict' two core concepts with regard to this thesis, which are discussed in greater detail in the following two sections.

2.2 Breaking down the Concept of 'Women': Conflict as a Window of Opportunity

Conflicts do not only differ in their impact on men as opposed to women but women's experiences might also differ greatly from each other and depend on factors such as ethnicity, social status, and religion: "Applying these insights helps us see the political, social, and economic processes of normalization that sustain hierarchies. All sorts of values, practices, norms, and institutions impede, exclude, ignore, or marginalize some women, but not all women, nor only women" (Ackerly, 2008, p.40). Moreover, the notion that women should be included in peace building efforts based on their natural proneness to being more peaceful and compromise seeking, due to their functions as mothers and care takers, remains persistent and has become an integral part of the

international discourse on women as peacemakers. There have been instances in which women have made active use of their role as mothers in order to make their demands heard among their respective societies; one example of this being the Association of War Affected Women in Sri Lanka with the aim of “unit[ing] women from both sides of the divide around their shared status as mothers, sisters and wives of servicemen, and seek[ing] to foster an identity as women that will transcend their ethnic affiliations” (Peace Direct, 2016). In the Colombian context, the motto of women’s rights movement *La Ruta Pacífica de las Mujeres (Ruta Pacífica)* for instance is “women will not bear sons and daughters for war”³ which also refers to women primarily as mothers resisting war led efforts in order to keep their (future) children safe. While this form of activism called maternalism has proven to be a powerful tool in acknowledging women’s voices during times of conflict, feminist scholars have raised concern that this approach ends up reinforcing militarised masculinities as well as the notion of a femininity of peace. Moreover, as Cynthia Cockburn (2007) notes, women evoking the argument of maternalism “instead of speaking for themselves as autonomous women [...] seem to be reducing themselves to nothing-but-mothers, to a biological function and a stereotypical role, thereby reinforcing what society already imposes” (pp.209-10).

In the patriarchal system which governs most states and their institutions, everything and everyone associated with feminine traits is considered subordinate to the prevailing ‘hegemonic masculinity’; a term introduced by R.W. Connell (1995) in his ‘social theory of gender’. This concerns first and foremost women but also men who do not live up to the expectations connected to the hegemonic masculinity of the society they are living in. It is important to note that hegemonic masculinity has no inherent traits as such but is a relational concept and “is upheld by its dynamic relation with subordinated masculinities, most notably homosexual masculinity” (Budgeon, 2014, p.322). What exactly constitutes the hegemonic masculinity at any given point in time or place may be subject to change and is to be understood as “the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gender relations, a position always contestable” (Connell, 1995, p.76). Different masculinities and femininities interact with each other on the societal playing field thereby producing the type of masculinity considered hegemonic and most desirable, “their making and remaking [of

³ “Las mujeres no parimos hijos e hijas para la guerra”

masculinities] is a political process affecting the balance of interests in society and the direction of social change” (Connell, 1995, p.44). In the case of Colombia, hegemonic masculinity clearly is of a militarised nature. Militarised masculinities are constructed by different entities engaging in combat or designed to defend, be it a state’s military or some type of non-state armed actor, and can be described as the “fusion of certain practices and images of maleness with the use of weapons, the exercise of violence, and the performance of an aggressive and frequently misogynist masculinity” (Theidon, 2009, p.5). Reward and repetition ensure the recruits’ commitment thereby training them to become “violent enough to kill if asked” while remaining “willing to subordinate themselves to hierarchy and authority” (Detraz, 2012, pp.30-31).

When asked why they joined an armed group, be it the guerrilla or the paramilitaries, Colombian ex-combatants are often cited not having had promising alternatives in their search for respect, security for themselves and their families, or a basic income: “In the complex scenario of violence that characterizes Colombia, cycling through an armed group is a rite of passage for many young men. In a context of generalized violence, the proliferation of criminal networks, a limited legal labor market, and a cultural economy that fuses weapons, masculinity, and power, grabbing a gun is not necessarily an aberration” (Theidon, 2009, pp.16-17). The fact that many recruits are still minors at their point of entry further exacerbates the notion of joining an armed group as a rite of passage. Joining the paramilitaries, for instance, while being one of the few viable options to survive in a region of Colombia where state control is completely absent, furthermore, allowed the young recruits to “feel like a big man in the streets of their barrios [...] to go out with the prettiest young women and to dress well” (ibid). Consequently, the process of DDR and handing over one’s weapon, particularly in a scenario in which the state is not considered trustworthy or capable of ensuring the individual’s safety and physical integrity, can feel emasculating. Often, this feeling of loss of power is getting transmitted into the returning recruits’ households in the form of domestic violence under which women tend to suffer most.

In addition to that, the common depiction of women’s bodies as representing the nation or the homeland in need of protection from the enemy is what gives a great part of conflict-related violence meaning. At the same time it endangers women further as degrading them is getting equalled with discrediting the opponent who was not strong

enough to provide adequate protection for the vulnerable parts of his population. Consequently, sexual violence becomes a war strategy aimed at taking away the enemy's will to fight as well as a means of terror to forcefully displace populations when confronted with the threat of mass rapes which count as tactics of ethnic cleansing and genocide "Women and their bodies are seen as the repository and reproducers of national, racial, ethnic, tribal, or religious identity – they are the vessels through which men [...] can (re)produce new members of the group; thus their bodies are the territory over which men must have control in order to assure the continuation of their national identities, bloodlines, and their familial and national honor" (Cohn, 2013, p.14).

In summary of the points outlined above, Hilary Charlesworth (2008) identifies 'four orthodoxies' which have gained prominence in the discourse on women and conflict. Firstly, "an assumption that women are better than men at developing and sustaining peace" secondly, "a tendency to assert that women are more vulnerable than men" often exemplified by the prominent practice to reduce "women and children" to one single category of victims (p.351). The third orthodoxy refers to the frequent reference in international legal documents to "the need to include women in formal peace negotiations" (ibid) without, however, sufficiently explaining what this need is based on; the fact that women are inherently more peaceful than men and therefore predisposed to achieving a sustainable and durable peace or because of their equality in rights to participate in these negotiations. Charlesworth suggests the former. Lastly she raises a point which has attracted substantial criticism throughout other works of the literature on women and conflict as well (Aroussi, 2011, Theidon, 2009) namely that "the use of the term 'gender'" usually is meant "to refer only to women" (Charlesworth, 2008, p.351) therefore "making gender-based violence synonymous with sexual violence against women"(Aroussi, 2011, p.588).

This thesis adopts a similar standpoint, according to which the failure to clearly define what exactly constitutes women's 'participation' and the 'need' to include them in peace negotiations, obstructs successful implementation of the WPS agenda. Moreover, this thesis comes to a similar conclusion as outlined above, according to which the common neglect of the relational nature of the concept of 'gender' constitutes a core hindrance to designing post-conflict strategies which will result in a sustainable peace.

The reason why conflict constitutes a window of opportunity for women lies in its potential to overturn traditional masculinities and femininities along the battle lines as well as at home when both men and women are required to take up roles and tasks not traditionally associated with their gender. Due to the changes in society deriving from the conflict, some women are able to record gains in the social, political, and economic sphere (Meintjes, Pillay & Turshen, 2003). The difficulties of preserving the gains made by women during conflict times in the aftermath of the conflict are described in the subsequent section.

2.3 Breaking down the Concept of ‘Post-Conflict’: Women and the Danger of ‘Backlash’

What exactly constitutes a post-conflict society is contested. Measures such as signing ceasefire agreements for example do not automatically lead to a post-conflict society. Nonetheless, countries are usually considered post-conflict when a peace agreement has been signed, and the armed fighting has ceased. The concept of ‘post-conflict’ can be criticised due to its vagueness and ambivalence to the different experiences of women and men during this time. Additionally, it can be described as “an excuse for the main development agencies and international powers to devote fewer resources to the amelioration of complex political emergencies [...] and to allow structural adjustment policies to reign as usual [...] To label war as peace is not only Orwellian, but also it justifies implementing shock therapy to create the market cure for war” (Moore, 2000, p.13). Subsequently, with regard to this thesis’ main research endeavour, the question needs to be asked: what does a post-conflict situation look like for women in particular?

Structuring their analysis along the lines of a similar question Sheila Meintjes, Anu Pillay and Meredith Turshen (2003) come to the conclusion that there “is no aftermath for women” observing instead that “the transition from war to peace, or from military dictatorship to democracy, the rhetoric of equality and rights tends to mask the reconstruction of patriarchal power, despite recent emphasis on women's human rights” (p.4). Most likely the environment in which women find themselves after the fighting has stopped is characterised by tension. On the one hand, the desire of returning to a stability associated with pre-conflict times and the traditional gender roles associated with this time period exists. This desire, on the other hand, then clashes with the will to interlock the gains and progress made during times of conflict with the newly emerging

post-conflict architecture of a country's societal setup. Ruth Jacobson (2013), therefore introduces the term "*post-combat*" in order to draw attention to the fact that there are many regions in the world which are "not 'technically' at war" but "are marked by levels of deaths and casualties that invoke the same terminology" (p.215, original emphasis). Raising awareness of the social and economic inequalities among other threats such as environmental destruction and poverty which continue to persist within and among numerous regions in the world she warns that "we must, at least, be wary of claims that 'conflict' is a thing of the past in any state" (ibid).

During peace building processes, discourses and practices promoted by international institutions such as the UN, contribute to reinforcing and reproducing gendered power relations. The reasons to include or exclude the issue of women and 'doing gender' in operations of liberal peacebuilding are manifold and deeply politicised. As Heidi Hudson (2012) observes, "keeping women out, or SGBV [sexual gender-based violence] off the table often serves a pragmatic [...] purpose - ensuring that the peace agreement between elites proceeds unhindered" (p.445). In a similar vein, Sabine Kurtenbach (2012) criticises so called 'gentlemen's agreements' enabling peace by granting amnesty to the militarily defeated parties. However, she also notes that due to the establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) under the Rome Statute in 2002, this issue is not exclusively to be dealt with domestically anymore but can be brought into the spotlight of the international arena with the potential of challenging before international law amnesty arrangements made at the national level. This bears both the opportunity for victims to experience some sort of compensation as well as the threat to render the conclusion of final peace agreements more problematic as insurgent fighters are less likely to make concessions if they face long sentences in jail. From the point of view of the survivors of sexual violence, Colombia's subjugation to the ICC is paramount as the Rome Statute is the first international judicial tool "to consider as war crimes and crimes against humanity sexual and gender-based crimes - including persecution based on gender, as well as rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization, and other forms of sexual violence" (Bouvier, 2016, p.12).

Over the course of Colombia's history, moreover, a number of laws have been passed in order to address problems of gender inequality and violence against women.

Some laws focus on participation and establish quotas to guarantee women's representation in public institutions and political parties (Law 581, 2000 & Law 1475, 2011) or gender equality more generally (Law 1257, 2008). Others have at their core the aim of erasing violence against women and girls (Law 248, 1997, Law 679, 2001), thereby acknowledging the particular vulnerability of displaced women (Order 092, 2008) and rural women (Law 731, 2002) (AMOR, 2014, ABColombia, 2013). One law in particular is worth noting at this point, namely law 1761 of the year 2015 or better known as the Law *Rosa Elvira Cely*: a law against femicide. According to the WHO, femicide can be defined as the "intentional murder of women" which "is usually perpetrated by men" (WHO, 2012, p.1). Moreover, femicide is said to differ "from male homicide in specific ways" as "most cases of femicide are committed by partners or ex-partners, and involve ongoing abuse in the home, threats or intimidation, sexual violence or situations where women have less power or fewer resources than their partner" (ibid). Consequently, a great number of femicides could be prevented by intervening early enough. According to Colombian women's rights organisation *Sisma Mujer*, in Colombia every eleven minutes a woman is being attacked by her partner or ex-partner, one in thirty is a victim of sexual violence and every three days a woman is being murdered: "The aggressions, sexual violence and femicides in a society as macho as the Colombian one is a *silent war* which, moreover, is accompanied by high levels of impunity"⁴ (Sulé, 2014d, original emphasis). Sexual violence as a strategy of war turning women's bodies into a battlefield has been employed by state, guerrilla, and paramilitary forces with the latter, however, accounting by far for the greatest number of human rights violations (Bouvier, 2016, Sulé, 2014a, ABColombia, 2013).

Femicide rates in Colombia increased by 22 per cent in 2016 when compared to 2015. Sexual violence rates also saw an increase by seven per cent, making Colombia one of the countries with the highest femicide rates worldwide (El Tiempo, 2017). Furthermore, certain segments of the population constitute the majority of victims of these crimes and the impunity that regularly accompanies them. Indigenous, queer, lesbian, and Afro-Colombian women suffer substantially more from these crimes showing once more how inequalities intersect and reinforce each other (Werner, 2017). The roots of the alarmingly high number of femicides are to be found in the macho

⁴ "Las agresiones, la violencia sexual y los feminicidios en una sociedad tan machista como la colombiana es *una guerra silenciosa* que va además acompañada de altos niveles de impunidad"

foundation of Colombian society and the domination of a hegemonic masculinity characterized by militarization. Machismo as defined by the Oxford Dictionary counts as “aggressive male behaviour that emphasises the importance of being strong”. This type of behaviour undoubtedly characterises Colombian society and constitutes the main source of insecurity for Colombian women; that “we have opened the door of the home [...] [is] still unacceptable for many men”⁵ in a Colombia where “the expression ‘gender justice’ still sounds unwonted”⁶ (Thomas, 2017).

While welcoming the attention drawn to these issues, women’s rights organisation *Casa de la Mujer* criticises the over proportional focus on punishment by judicial means to combat the problem of violence against women instead of putting an emphasis on the possible ways of preventing this kind of behaviour. Moreover, even where suitable laws exist, law enforcement agencies at times are not aware of their existence or question the necessity of “filling [...] prisons with men who only saw ‘their hand slip’”⁷ (Casmujer, 2013, p.12). Furthermore, personnel responsible for applying these laws might not be sensitised sufficiently to the special circumstances and realities of female victims of the conflict. Consequently, the danger exists that measures designed to help women can indeed lead to a re-victimisation of the ones who had been seeking protection therefore further deteriorating women’s trust in the judicial system as a credible way to achieve justice (Casmujer, 2012).

Despite the progress women’s rights have made on paper in Colombia, many issues remain to be addressed in order to guarantee women’s physical and emotional integrity. The ongoing conflict with the militarised masculinities it reproduces further exacerbates this problem. Women’s rights organisations criticise the discrepancy between what is stated on paper and what is happening in women’s daily lives when confronted with the challenges of violence and marginalisation, “multiple forms of discrimination, exclusion and aggression [...] installed, since infancy, in both men and women to show us how we have to be like and behave [...] associating a good example [of a woman] with silence”⁸ (Reyes, 2017).

⁵ “hemos abierto la puerta de la casa [...] aún inaceptable para muchos hombres”

⁶ “la expresión ‘justicia de género’ suena todavía como insólita”

⁷ “llenar los [...] carcelarios con hombres ‘a los que se les fue la mano’”

⁸ “múltiples formas de discriminación, de exclusión y de aggression [...] instaladas desde la infancia, igual en hombres y mujeres, para mostrarnos cómo debemos ser y comportarnos [...] asocie buen ejemplo con silencio”

2.4 The UNSCR 1325 Framework on Women, Peace and Security

Taking the time period of the years 1992 to 2011, out of the chief mediators of peace processes only two per cent were women, with female negotiators in peace processes constituting just nine per cent (O'Reilly, Ó Súilleabháin &, Paffenholz, 2015). In a similar manner, UN Women (n.d.) observes that “out of 585 peace agreements from 1990 to 2010, only 92 contained any references to women. In 2013, more than half of all peace agreements signed included references to women, peace and security. From 1992 to 2011, fewer than four per cent of signatories to peace agreements [...] were women”. Analysing explicit references to women and gender in peace agreements from 1990 to 2010, Christine Bell and Catherine O'Rourke (2010) see a positive role played by the UN, as the references to women and gender have increased after the passing of UNSCR 1325, and are more likely to be found among the agreements to end conflicts in which the UN was involved as a third party. This, however, does not necessarily lead to an actual improvement in women's lives as the realisation that greater gender equality is beneficial to a society cannot be imposed from above, but has to be rooted in the society itself.

In order to recognise women as essential agents in creating a lasting peace, the UNSC has passed several Resolutions since the year 2000. Ever since UNSCR 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security of the year 2000, international actors' attention has been drawn to the fact that the impact of conflict differs for women and men. Acknowledging that women, and their unique experiences as well as the contributions they could make to conflict resolution, had largely been neglected over the past, the Resolution is considered a milestone with regard to promoting women's rights. UNSCR 1325 therefore “*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”. This Resolution, moreover, is considered to lay the foundations for the WPS agenda, the overall policy architecture of which, is comprised of eight Resolutions in total: UNSCR 1325 (2000), UNSCR 1820 (2008), UNSCR 1888 (2009), UNSCR 1889 (2009), UNSCR 1960 (2010), UNSCR 2106 (2013), UNSCR 2122 (2013), and UNSCR 2242 (2015).

The four central themes, or pillars, characterising the current WPS agenda deriving from UNSCR 1325 are: prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery. These pillars acknowledged as being “pertinent to matters of international peace and security” (George & Shepherd, 2016, p.298) deal with the following: “participation, addressing the pressing issues of women’s political leadership in peace and security governance; prevention, focusing on strategies to combat violence; protection, of both the rights and bodies of women; and relief and recovery for conflict survivors, particularly survivors of sexualised violence in conflict” (ibid). The term sexual violence is used to describe forms of both physical and psychological violence with sexuality being the means or target of an act of violence. In the context of conflict, “conflict-related sexual violence refers to ‘rape, sexual slavery, forced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization and other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity perpetrated against women, men, girls or boys that is linked, directly or indirectly (temporally, geographically or causally) to a conflict’” (Bouvier, 2016, p.9). Out of the resolutions mentioned above, UNSCR 2242 was passed after the 15th anniversary of UNSCR 1325, and comes closest to the issues originally covered in UNSCR 1325 which means it is relatively balanced between the different pillars. Excluding UNSCRs 1325 and 2242, however, the picture is more skewed towards addressing issues related to depicting women as victims of conflict-related sexual violence in need of protection: “Only Resolutions 1889 and 2122 focus primarily on participation issues, while four of the remaining WPS resolutions address violence prevention and protection (Resolutions 1820, 1888, 1960 and 2106)” (Kirby & Shepherd, 2016, p.380).

Figure 1. Overview of WPS Pillars.

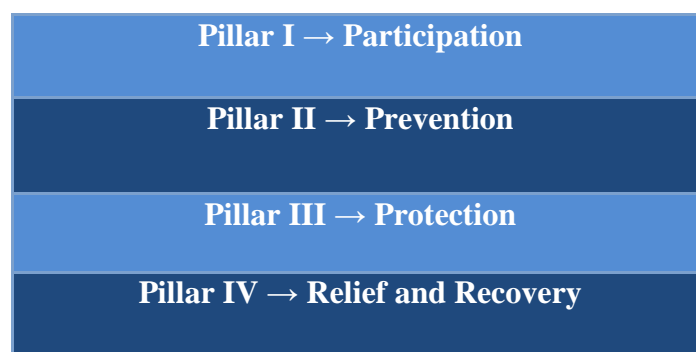


Figure 2. Overview of the WPS Framework.



Strand I: Participation and Representation

Generally speaking, UNSCR 1325 can be welcomed as a tool to support women's agency in peace building processes by seeking to advance their participation and representation in peace processes. Sheri Gibbings (2011), singles out three arguments central to 1325; increase the "participation of women in various bodies, institutions and processes related broadly to peace and security" aim for "the incorporation of a gender perspective into all these processes and institutions" and establish "a mechanism through which the Security Council can take into account gender and the rights of women" (p.528). However, feminist scholarship is divided as to whether this Resolution and the WPS framework in general "represents a shift toward a more inclusive, gender-sensitive, global governance, whether it undermines women's grassroots struggles for justice and security or whether it is mere rhetoric that changes little in practice" (Pratt & Richter-Devroe, 2011, p.499). 1325, however, also contributes to the "depiction of unproblematized gender roles" and does little to critically challenge the "utopian assumptions that a female presence will result in positive change" (Hudson, 2012, p.450). Moreover, its "overemphasis on essentialist, stereotypical notions of women as victims or mothers underplays the role of women as political agents in conflict, and conversely masks the victimhood of men and boys" (ibid). Nicola Pratt (2013), furthermore, points out that "1325 privileges gender above race, class, or other significant relations of power in understanding women's experiences and responses to conflict" and criticises "that while 1325 reconfigures the gendered binaries of international security, it does so by reinscribing racialized and sexualized hierarchies in the conceptualization and practice of international security" (pp.773-4) thereby failing

to acknowledge the issue of intersectionality. UNSCR 1889's main contribution is its call to develop a set of indicators in order to track the implementation of 1325 in order to face critiques with respect to the latter's effectiveness.

Criticism, has been directed at the official UN discourse and the "powerful norms" existent around the WPS agenda which is anchored in the UN's "master narrative" which is expected to be "positive, hopeful and future oriented" in order to "mobilise a vision that enrolls a number of different interests and masks any ideological differences [...] a vision wherein women are no longer abused and their contributions are recognised" and which "situate Resolution 1325 in relation to the UN's historical goal to make the world a better place" (Gibbings, 2011, pp.526-8). This touches upon the issues of how women are being expected to act as peacemakers and of the role language plays in the process of reinforcing the image of women as peace-loving. In this context, the role of the UN as one of the most powerful international actors is paramount and while "one of the key ways that power is negotiated at the UN is through language [...] the UN discourses that are uplifting, positive and present women as peacemakers are the most valued" (ibid). Whereas the rights based approach, according to which women deserve to be included in peace processes based on the fact that they are holding the same human rights as men, is still to be found in speeches held at the UN, two supplementary discourses have emerged. The first, according to Gibbings, is the one referring to "special treatment rights" according to which "women and girls need to be paid attention because conflict affects them differently" and the one deriving its legitimacy from "contributor rights" according to which "women can make a difference when it comes to peace" (p.529). Consequently, women are marketed as a resource which can make a difference in a peace process due to their ability of linking the higher level of the UN with the grassroots in societies plagued by conflict.

In order to make their concerns heard, NGOs and women's rights advocates therefore had to adjust their language to the norms prevalent at the UN because "if language is power, then to use the same speech forms as the Security Council members" allowed the representatives of women's rights NGOs "to situate themselves on a similar playing field as Member States" (Gibbings, 2011, p.532). This required for instance a rhetoric shift away from anti-militarism towards the "positive and uplifting language of the UN" and therefore "the route to peace and ending war in this approach was no

longer a reduction in military spending but the integration of women and a gender perspective; women were viewed and constructed as peacemakers, fitting with the more utopian visions circulating at the UN” (Gibbings, 2011, p.533). Consequently, some discourses carry more weight than others thereby silencing discourses which mismatch the predominant picture of women as peacemakers according to which “women are positioned as overcoming conflict as agents of the local, but simultaneously as having interests in universal good [...] expected to embody and reproduce this image as upholders of peace in their communities” (Gibbings, 2011, p.534).

As opposed to past trends of the WPS agenda of shifting the focus more towards the issue of protecting women from conflict-related sexual violence (as discussed in the next sub-section), UNSCR 2122 is considered “radically different” (Shepherd, 2014, p.2) as it not only calls for UN-wide action including the UNSC itself to make the WPS criteria an integral part of its own agenda, but also due to the significant amount of attention it dedicates to the role of civil society organisations in advancing the WPS agenda.

Strand II: Prevention and Protection

UNSCR 1820 constitutes the second Resolution passed within the UN’s WPS framework, nine years after 1325, and the first one to address the issue of conflict-related sexual violence. It was later followed by Resolutions 1888, 1960, and 2106. Briefly summarised, 1820 states that rape or other forms of sexual violence might, under certain circumstances, constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide. Most importantly, it calls for an end to impunity for these crimes, calls for an exclusion of this sort of crime from amnesty provisions, and explicitly establishes a link between sexual violence and women’s effective participation in matters of peace and security tackling the widespread notion of rape as “an unavoidable by product of war” (Goldenberg Goldstoff, 2010, p.491).

Similar to the Resolutions dealing with increasing women’s participation and representation in negotiations and peace processes, feminist scholars have criticised the second strand of Resolutions on grounds that the focus on sexual violence, while seeking to make women’s lives safer, bears the danger of further contributing to the image of women being weak and dependent on other people’s protection. Melissa Goldenberg Goldstoff (2010), deems Resolution 1820 “imperfect but necessary” in

order to “protect civilians from rape in war zones” (ibid), but she also criticises the fact that it “isolates the aspect of women as rape victims” despite the fact that “portraying women as the victim only weakens them in the eyes of men and potential rapists” (Goldenberg Goldstoff, 2010, p.514) therefore potentially victimising women instead of empowering them. Moreover, 1820 is flawed to the extent that it does not make clear what kind of punishment awaits the ones violating it.

When comparing both Resolutions 1820 and 1325, Hudson (2012) notes that “while UNSCR 1325 attempts to establish women’s agency – albeit a thin version – in peacebuilding processes, the narrow focus of UNSCR 1820 may vitiate UNSCR 1325, reinforce women’s victimhood, and largely exclude SGBV against men and boys [...] it follows that if women are cast as victims, the immediate effect is that the positive masculinity (protector) and negative masculinity (perpetrator) of men are reinforced” (p.450). Nonetheless, this thesis tends to support the approach brought forward by authors criticizing the dichotomy of women in conflict being either agents or victims. The fact that a woman has experienced sexual violence does not exempt her from being a powerful agent and advocate for change, “We should not focus so much on treating war as an opportunity for agency to the extent that we forget how horrific and unacceptable it is because of what it does to human beings. The victim-agent dichotomy also obscures the fact that the issues of participation and violence are inextricably linked” (Cook, 2009, p.128).

Similarly, Laura Shepherd (2011) argues against the notion of 1820 leading to the further victimization of women and sees the Resolution as well as its successor UNSCR 1888 as acknowledging women’s agency as they stress the need to have a strong female presence in formal peace processes as well as encourage an active participation in the security sector, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction. This is also due to a discursive shift, according to which the phrase “women and children”, as a bone of contention in UNSCRs 1325 and 1820, has been replaced by the term “civilians” in 1888. Gina Heathcote’s (2012) criticism, furthermore, is directed at UNSCR 1960’s operative paragraph number three. She criticises the approach according to which the UNSG and UNSC engage in a “naming and shaming” process of non-state armed actors suspected of committing acts of sexual violence as a reaction to claims that accountability mechanisms were missing from 1325. Heathcote (2012)

criticises that “without a renewed Security Council effort to respond to the need for recognition and support of women’s participation at all stages of conflict resolution (including in the Council itself), the approach of resolution 1960 remains one that [...] denies the intersection of race, class and gender in contemporary institutional approaches, and that does little to encourage the participation of nonstate actors, particularly armed groups” (p.22). She concludes that its impact will be minimal at best and counterproductive to reducing the impunity of armed groups perpetrating sexual violence at worst.

With regard to the role of the UN in particular, Sahla Aroussi (2011) notes that a “broad and holistic approach” is needed in order to secure women’s safety and participation which “necessarily entails a break from the traditionally militaristic and masculinised Security Council’s strategies of sanctions and punishments” (p.577). In order to do so, the UNSC is required to not only focus on justice in the sense of criminal prosecution and accountability, but to move the victims’ needs and desires to the centre stage of all questions related to achieving justice. It is about disrupting the link which exists between the “militaristic and masculinised perception of rape” and “equally masculinised and militaristic responses” according to which rape “becomes a masculine problem that can only be solved through masculine solutions of military discipline or threat of punishment from a masculinised state” (p.589).

While the various UNSCRs on which the WPS framework is based can indeed be criticised on several grounds, this thesis proceeds from the standpoint that despite their shortcomings, these Resolutions constitute an important stepping stone for women’s rights organisations and have significantly improved women’s bargaining positions in official peace processes. The main point of criticism in this regard is directed at the framework’s effectiveness in cases where there is no direct UN involvement as no tools exist to hold accountable states which fall short in including women in their peace processes.

Whereas the current section sought to illustrate the theoretical background of this thesis, the subsequent section introduces its analytical framework by further elaborating on the methodology and sources used in this study. It does so by shedding light on what it means to conduct qualitative research from a feminist perspective. Moreover, it describes in greater detail how the set of indicators, according to which the

analytical part is structured, have been derived. Additionally, the next section elaborates on this study's contribution to the academic literature as well as its shortcomings and potential for further research.

3. Analytical Framework

Feminist methodology is an emancipatory project aimed at upholding constant awareness of the power hierarchies underlying not only the dynamics of the study topic at hand, but also the process of academic research as such. Consequently, this approach to conducting research seeks to pay attention to issues of imbalance, inequality, and oppression unmasking certain actors and voices rendered silent. Their marginalisation often tends to be either made invisible or portrayed as being something natural or given. It is wrong, however, to assume that feminist research could only be conducted by women. It can be considered a tool aimed at making every step of one's research more self-critical and self-aware, thereby enriching any kind of research by raising awareness of one's own privilege and biases by adopting "a theoretical perspective with a methodological commitment to be attentive to privilege and hierarchy not only as a subject of study but also as a way of studying" (Ackerly, 2008, p.39). Consequently, "the point is not to identify *a* perspective to privilege, but to deploy a device that destabilizes the perspective from which we 'know'" (ibid.). The question of power is at the very heart of every feminist inquiry and "is about revealing unquestioned differences and inequalities that conceal the exercise of power, including the power to conceal those differences and inequalities, and being attentive to the power exercised when researching these" (Ackerly, 2008, p.30).

In order to answer the research question as to what extent the WPS framework is reflected in the Colombian peace process between the Santos government and the FARC, this thesis puts an analytical focus on the final version of the peace agreement of November 2016. In order to assess compliance with the WPS framework, a set of indicators was derived from the operative paragraphs of all eight UNSCRs comprising the UN framework on WPS. Only the provisions which were also addressed at member states, as opposed to the ones exclusively directed for example at the SG, were included in the list of indicators to be applied to the final peace agreement. Certain provisions were mentioned multiple times in several of the Resolutions. In these cases, the most concrete formulation was included in the list of indicators. Moreover, provisions which were kept overly vague in the Resolutions were also excluded from the list of indicators as compliance with these would be difficult to measure satisfyingly. Subsequently, each indicator was then allocated to one of the four pillars constituting the WPS framework

(participation, prevention, protection, relief and recovery) in order to render compliance with the aims outlined in the framework measurable. While the main area of application of this set of indicators is the peace agreement, the analysis at times expands to include DDR and TJ measures. Consequently, the time period under investigation covers the entirety of the conflict in Colombia, however, an emphasis is put on the period from 2012 until 2017, as this time period covers the complete Havana peace talks as well as the first months of the implementation phase.

With regard to the main source of this analysis, uncertainty persists on a number of aspects of peace agreements: their legal footing, and international effects, whether they confer legal capacity to non-state armed actors, and their relationship to international law. All these factors further complicate the implementation phase. On the outset, “peace agreements share a legal-looking structure” by making use of “preambles, sections, articles, and annexes. They also share legal-type language, speaking of parties, signatories, and binding obligations” (Bell, 2006, p.378). Additionally, “the structure and language of peace agreements suggest that the parties mutually view them as legal documents” (ibid). What renders the determination of the legal status of a peace agreement problematic, however, is the blurred line between a conflict being neither entirely interstate nor internal in nature, “the presence of non-state signatories tends to take them outside international legal definitions of ‘treaty’ or ‘international agreement,’ while the presence of multiple state parties tends to make them difficult to analyze as domestic legal documents” (ibid). Scholarly opinion is divided on this issue: “While most authors do not view peace agreements as treaties, some suggest that they form part of new transnational regimes [...] Critics of these proposals point out that the creation of new regimes leads to new self-contained categories that go against the purpose of these agreements: often, parties to a peace accord [...] do not want to be separated from international law, but rather connected to it” in order to “provide protection from possible modifications and future breaches” and therefore advocate for an interpretation according to which “peace accords must be understood as binding agreements under international law because this legal status is key to achieving the benefits sought by these agreements” (Betancur Restrepo, 2016, p.190).

In addition to the method of assessing the final peace agreement and the

following DDR and TJ measures against the backdrop of the set of indicators derived from the eight UNSCRs comprising the WPS framework, this thesis makes use of some complementary field research in the form of interviews and personal field observations. To this end, I spent four weeks during March 2017 in Colombia's capital Bogotá. As an intern of the women's rights organisation *Casa de la Mujer*, I sought to broaden my understanding of the complex conflict dynamics at hand and to enrich my thesis work with some sources of additional information.

Apart from my experiences with the *Casa de la Mujer*, I conducted interviews with representatives of the following organisations: *Ruta Pacífica*, UN Women Colombia, Women's Link Worldwide, and the International Office for Human Rights – Action on Colombia (OIDHACO Spanish acronym) in order to deepen my understanding of how useful of an instrument the UN's WPS framework is on the ground and in the context of the armed conflict in Colombia in particular.⁹ The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner, loosely following the questions attached in the annex of this thesis. The aim of these investigations was to shed light on the question not only as to what extent the WPS framework is reflected in the peace process, but how much of an active use these organisations make of Resolution 1325. Also importantly, what their attitude towards this framework looked like in order to see whether an explicit link exists between the level of inclusivity of the Colombian peace process and the existence of the WPS framework at an international level.

Furthermore, with regard to conducting interviews and field research, the specificities of the feminist approach need to be taken into account. As Cecilie and Iver Neumann (2015), point out “feminist literature [...] has first and foremost pinpointed the pre-field phase and addressed the relevance of autobiographical situatedness” (p.4). Consequently, before engaging in field research and sharing my observations with my audience, it is advisable to point to my own situatedness which is characterised by a high level of privilege due to my origin and upbringing. It becomes striking when compared to the lives of women coming from countries suffering from conflict and an overall less fortunate and stable economic and political situation – this should be kept in mind at all times. Consequently, my perspective is shaped by several layers of privilege such as analysing conflicts mainly from afar and it is not comparable to the problems

⁹ For more information on these organisations see Appendix 5

and issues the majority of women face in their daily lives all over the world. While travelling to Bogotá was supposed to mitigate some of these issues by experiencing the conflict from within the country itself, instead of merely reading about it from a great distance, I did not visit the actual zones of fighting or disarmament thereby still enjoying a greater level of safety than the majority of subjects I am researching.

Starting from this position of privilege logically has consequences for each following step of my research. Therefore, an attempt was made to structure the research along the principle of supplication which is about “seeking reciprocal relationships based on empathy and mutual respect” while acknowledging “that the knowledge of the person being researched (at least regarding the particular questions being asked) is greater than that of the researcher” (England, 1994, p.243). What makes this approach appealing is the possibility to point out and deal with “asymmetrical and potentially exploitative power relations by shifting a lot of power over to the researched” (England, 1994, p.243, original emphasis). Furthermore, with regard to my research, a distinction needs to be made between getting in contact with women working for international or domestic civil society organisations, and with the ‘ordinary’ women living in post-conflict Colombia. While activists aim at representing less marginalised voices, they themselves can be considered more privileged with regard to the resources at their disposal.

Contribution to the Literature and Significance of the Research

This thesis seeks to contribute to the existing literature on women and conflict by turning the rather abstract WPS framework consisting of various UNSCRs into a set of measurable indicators. This serves the purpose of facilitating the application of the WPS framework to a concrete case study thereby assessing its presence in current peace building efforts involving the UN. The Colombian case as such is of interest and deserves attention as it not only represents one of the longest on-going internal armed conflicts worldwide, but also serves as an example of how a negotiated solution to a prolonged conflict has been found without external intervention. Due to the dynamic nature of post-conflict contexts, the timing of this research is decisive as it incorporates the latest developments in the Colombian peace process with the signing of the final peace accord only having taken place several months ago and with implementation

being in its crucial first phase. Moreover, it follows the UN's global study on the implementation of 1325 marking the 15th anniversary of the passing of the Resolution. It therefore incorporates all eight Resolutions of the WPS framework thereby enabling a state of the art analysis.

With the bulk of the literature focusing on the first two Resolutions of the WPS framework, namely UNSCR 1325 and 1820, this thesis seeks to add to the existing literature by expanding the scope of the analysis to also include the latest developments with regard to the UN's WPS agenda. It does so by scrutinising to what extent the provisions outlined in the (latest) Resolutions are featured in the Colombian peace agreement between the Santos government and the FARC. This research, additionally, seeks to deepen our understanding of how women can contribute to peace processes as well as which roles women play in the Colombian peace process in particular. The subsequent analysis, furthermore, seeks to add to our understanding of TJ measures with regard to victims of sexual violence and scrutinises in greater detail a finding articulated by Aroussi (2011), according to which "provisions on justice for victims of sexual violence remain very scarce in peace agreements and the UN agenda on women, peace and security has not so far impacted on peace agreements" while criticising the "glaring omission . . . of any forms of reparations or other forms of redress for victims" (p.585) and test this statement in the Colombian context.

Limitations

While the timing of this research can certainly be regarded as an asset, it also complicates the assessment of compliance of the Colombian final peace agreement with the WPS framework as it is too early on in the process to measure its impact on the DDR and TJ processes conclusively. Moreover, there is always the danger of 'backlash' and whether the measures envisioned in the accord can prove successful in addressing the underlying causes of violence and discrimination against women remains to be seen. Consequently, the analysis as undertaken in this thesis with regard to the agreement's implementation phase is limited to pointing out first tendencies, and a full assessment of the accord's implementation in accordance with the WPS framework is to be left to future research projects. A further limitation relates to the fact that findings are difficult to generalize, and future research would benefit from including more cases to further

test the findings of this study to single out possible pathways of improvement when implementing the WPS framework.

Limitations to this thesis, moreover, persist due to the fact that analyzing the WPS agenda's influence on the final peace accord only tells us little as to what extent the actual everyday lives of women in Colombia are going to improve. Peace agreements always embody compromise between the disputing parties and the language used in these documents therefore is vague, and the measures envisioned tend to lack clear definitions. Similarly, establishing a clear link between the provisions envisioned in the UNSCRs and the measures outlined in the Colombian final peace agreement could prove problematic. Even in cases in which compliance of the final peace accord with the UN framework can be observed, it might be difficult to mark this compliance as being a direct consequence of the WPS frame. Furthermore, with regard to the set of indicators derived from the eight UNSCRs, one needs to take into account that not all of these indicators are applicable to the Colombian context. It also may be difficult to decide at what point exactly an indicator can be considered fulfilled.

Nevertheless, this thesis has sought to remedy some of these limitations by focusing not only on the UN level of analysis, but by incorporating field research and interviews moving the analysis closer to the grassroot level and the everyday experiences of Colombian women. Additionally, in order to overcome the issue of doubts with regard to the fulfilment of some of the indicators, the analysis is not limited to the final accord only and incorporates some key developments in the judicial and political spheres which took place in the years preceding the Havana peace talks as well as by including some of the implementation process' early DDR and TJ efforts.

The following section now seeks to give a brief overview of the factors that gave rise to conflict in Colombia and of the different actors involved. In this context, a special emphasis is being put on the various roles women played during the internal armed struggle as well as the country's history of peace talks.

4. Overview: Women and the Colombian Internal Armed Conflict

The internal struggle between the FARC guerrilla and the Colombian state officially began in 1964 (Hörtner, 2013). Struggles over genuine political participation of marginalised groups as a result of persisting social and economic imbalance between the different societal segments and geographical regions within Colombia, as well as the strong polarisation of society along the lines of Liberal and Conservative party alignment, are recurring themes within the conflict (Gehring & Gontermann, 2012). One example of this are the years preceding active conflict between the FARC and the government, known as *La Violencia*, constituting one of the darkest chapters in Colombian history. Provoked by the assassination of promising Liberal presidential candidate Jorge Eliécer Gaitán, the years from 1948 to 1957 saw civil war-like conditions, such as the infamous *Bogotazo* riots, turning the country's capital into a battlefield, leaving around 200 000 Colombians dead. Gaitán had gathered significant support among the population due to his plans to address two of the key dividends in Colombian society: ongoing political exclusion by the country's elites of large fragments of society, and the persistent refusal to initiate direly needed agricultural reforms (Hataway, 2016, McFee, 2016, Gehring & Gontermann, 2012, König & Schuster, 2008). Consequently, many voters were left disappointed and in the end "the violence strengthened the traditional parties as the collective identities derived from membership were all that gave the violence meaning" (González, 2004, p.12). The rural self-defence groups which had formed in response to Conservative counter-attacks after the *Bogotazo* uprisings were to lay the foundation for the formation of the FARC. The political parties established what was called the *Frente Nacional* – the National Front instead; an agreement between the two major parties to share power evenly (König & Schuster, 2008). Subsequently, every four years control would be handed over from one party to the other. The National Front ended in 1974 which, however, did not translate into increased political participation by the guerrilla movements (König & Schuster, 2008, McFee, 2016).

The Colombian state as an actor in the country's internal armed struggle is mainly characterised by its weakness. The lack of a monopoly on the legitimate use of force resulted in a lack of control over large parts of the country's territory, enabling different armed actors to establish their own spheres of influence. State control is still

mainly limited to urban spaces and areas with resources and the Colombian state, throughout most of its history, suffered from a severe lack of legitimacy and societal consensus. This allowed violence to become a key element in the construction and maintenance of the state. Violence in Colombia therefore, “constitutes a central foundation of nation building without, however, being monopolised by a single actor and with even less overarching legitimacy” (Kurtenbach, 2010, p.4). Since the 1980s, various rightwing paramilitary groups have played a role in the internal armed conflict in Colombia clashing with the leftwing FARC over territory and resources. Originally created by land owners as legal self-defence groups to protect their property from the growing influence of the guerrillas, they began to unite and organise themselves independently under the overall umbrella organisation *Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia* (AUC) in the mid 1990s. Tolerated by the state, these armed rightwing groups engaged in extraordinarily aggressive and gruesome strategies to curb their enemy’s resistance and became the unofficial key component of the state’s counter-insurgency efforts (König & Schuster, 2008). Nevertheless, “the main targets of these groups have been unarmed civilians accused of being 'guerrilla collaborators', 'parasubversives', or 'plainclothes guerrillas'. Paramilitary groups have killed, silenced, or forced the displacement of thousands of trade unionists, social, political or human rights activists and leaders” (Romero, 2004, p.58).

The paramilitaries started to officially demobilise in 2004 under then President Álvaro Uribe. However, some fear that this process of demobilisation only masks a process of legalisation of these groups, given the strong existing links between paramilitary forces, the state military, and the Colombian government (Gehring & Gontermann, 2012, König & Schuster, 2008). On top of that, not all paramilitary groups followed the command to demobilise. As a consequence, dissident groups, now known as *bandas criminales* (BACRIM), continue to exercise influence rampantly in more remote regions of the country. Their heavy involvement in the drug trade significantly contributes to the continuous displacement of the civilian population as well as to the targeted killings of social movement leaders and human rights advocates. When talking to a young man during my stay in Bogotá who was originally from the Caquetá region in the south of Colombia, he agreed with the widespread notion that the Colombian state is neither trustworthy nor present in many regions of the country, leaving the population

to its own devices in the midst of the ongoing conflict: “We were not happy about the peace accord [...] at least they [the FARC] protected us”.

In contrast to the leftist guerrilla groups, female presence in the paramilitaries is relatively low and “not much is known about women paramilitaries” as certain characteristics of this group of combatants “such as the extremely tough military training, the culture of violence, and, especially, machismo, makes it unlikely that the number of women and girls who would voluntarily join is high” (Kunz & Sjöberg, 2009, p.8). Moreover, female members of paramilitary groups are less likely to take part in military undertakings outside the base, and their share of female fighters is estimated to be around 12 per cent (Ocampo et al, 2014; Cockburn, 2007). Consequently, out of around 30 000 demobilised paramilitary fighters, only 1960 were female (Kunz & Sjöberg, 2009).

Colombia, moreover, is home to numerous left-wing guerrilla groups with the two biggest ones being the FARC, and the *Ejército de Liberación Nacional*, the National Liberation Army (ELN). The number of female members of both FARC and ELN is said to vary between 30 and 40 per cent (O’Neill, 2015). Feminist scholarly opinion on women joining armed insurgent groups as female fighters is divided. Whereas some might argue that it represents a symbol of empowerment challenging traditional gender roles and domains perceived to be inherently masculine, others regard it as the expression of a deeply militarized society in which women are left with no choice but to acquire masculine traits and occupations in order to survive (Kunz & Sjöberg, 2009).

Presenting itself as an organisation with a mission to fight for social justice, the FARC regards itself as a group advancing feminist goals. Called *Farianas*, female recruits of the FARC promote the guerrilla group as a motor for social change, and an instrument to advance gender equality. Their mission states that “Equal responsibility commits us men and women to carry out the revolutionary project; our statute confers to us equal rights and obligations”¹⁰ (Farianas, 2013). The reasons for women (and men) to join an armed guerrilla group are diverse. Whereas some might agree with the mission of the guerrilla and see it as a legitimate and promising way to improve the political and social conditions in Colombia, others do not have much of a choice. Living in extreme

¹⁰ “A hombres y mujeres nos compromete igual responsabilidad de sacar adelante el proyecto revolucionario, nuestro estatuto nos confiere los mismos derechos y deberes”

poverty or in areas traditionally controlled by a guerrilla group might constitute reasons to join. One former female FARC recruit recalls that “In the countryside, there are regions where the only law is the one of the FARC or the paramilitaries”¹¹ (Sulé, 2014b).

Nonetheless, there are numerous accounts to be found according to which the FARC’s female combatants are not as liberated as stated in official FARC sources. One often cited example of the FARC monitoring women’s bodies is the one of obligatory use of birth control as well as forced abortions. Having children in the midst of war is considered impractical and even in cases where pregnancies had been allowed by commanders, these children had to be given away into someone else’s care. Estimates state there might have been around 1000 forced abortions per year among the FARC; exact numbers are, however, difficult to obtain as it is not a practice well documented (Rendón Marulanda, 2017). Moreover, as one former female FARC member observes, “with time you acquire masculine roles and behaviours, even the way of speaking and walking was lost”¹² coming to the conclusion that only upon leaving the FARC “I returned to being a woman”¹³ (Sulé, 2014c).

Other influential actors involved in the conflict are the international community, domestic civil society organisations, and the Catholic Church. The reputation of the Catholic Church during the mediation efforts has been the one of a “moral and spiritual guide” (Bell, 2006, p.401). With regard to the armed conflict, the Catholic Church in Colombia was most active in matters of reconciliation and providing a platform for the civilian victims of the conflict to exercise direct influence on the negotiations in Havana (Acevedo, 2016). Prior to the negotiations, Colombia suffered from the reputation of being a regional troublemaker and agreeing to involve the international community in the peace process is considered one of the core factors for its eventual success of leading to an agreement (García-Peña, 2004). Leaving aside the Havana peace talks, the involvement of the international community in the Colombian conflict has been mainly characterized by the US and its ‘Plan Colombia’, now mainly seen as a counter-insurgency programme directed against left-wing guerrilla groups (Ramírez Ocampo,

¹¹ “En el campo, hay regiones donde la única ley es la de las FARC o la de los paramilitares”

¹² “Con el paso del tiempo adquieres roles y comportamientos masculinos, se perdía hasta la forma de hablar y de caminar”

¹³ “volví a ser mujer”

2004). Despite the \$10 billion invested by the US in counter-narcotics strategies since the year 2000, cocaine production has risen by 32 per cent (Maas, 2017). Not surprisingly, US backing of Colombia's state armed forces, especially under the harsh policies of then-President Uribe, eventually also benefitted rightwing paramilitary groups (Selfa, 2005).

While often experiencing failures in efforts to achieve peace, Colombian society has proven determined to achieve an end to hostilities and one of the causes attributed to the failure of a great number of these initiatives is seen in the Colombian elites' lack of interest in bringing about profound reforms, "While the Colombian Establishment maybe has the 'will for peace' it does not have the 'will for change'. It wants peace but without eliminating the causes of the conflict" (Lozano Guillén, 2004, p.61). Disenchantment usually follows the failure of an official round of peace talks and might lead the negotiators, fighters, and big parts of the civilian population to believe that it is not a strategy worth pursuing. Subsequently, after the failed 2002 peace talks, prospects for peace in Colombia looked grim and then-President Uribe's response was not meant to settle the conflict by political means but by military defeat only. In the time period of 2002-2012, the role women played on an individual as well as collective level was crucial in keeping alive the spirit that peace by a negotiated settlement was indeed achievable. Their contributions were manifold and involved activities such as negotiating with insurgents or other armed actors in order to release hostages, to establish local ceasefires, and to lift roadblocks to keep up the flow of food and medicine. Moreover, they reported on committed human rights violations and were of core importance to direct top-level attention to matters such as returning refugees and internally displaced people, as well as compensation for victims (Strasser, 2016; UN Global Study, 2015).

Nonetheless, faultlines continue to run deep within Colombia's population and the close rejection of the first version of the peace accord between the FARC and the government in a plebiscite in October 2016, risked a new period of disenchantment taking hold of Colombian society. As María Isabel Rueda (2017) observes: "The negotiations with the FARC included concessions which many consider exorbitant – like the one that assassins and kidnappers can do politics [...] today, the drug dealers do not have to prove their innocence anymore to save themselves from prison or

extradition, instead it is sufficient to say that they belonged to the FARC in order to stay free”¹⁴.

While different reasons for the ‘no’ vote can be found, interesting with regard to this work’s research focus, concerns over the accord’s ‘gender ideology’ also formed part of the reasons for certain segments of voters to reject the proposal with “references to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) issues in the peace agreement” (ICG, 2017, p.11) which were “ripped out of context and used to anger most Evangelical voters” (ibid) due to their allegedly negative effects on the traditional spheres of family and society. This supposedly existing “gender ideology came back like a zombie” in the debates leading up to the plebiscite and the opposition portrayed the provisions of the accord as “making your kids homosexual”¹⁵ which led many people to reject the original version. Without a doubt, the gender focus of the accord can be described as “a deed with few precedents in the history of peace negotiations and political transitions, and draws from the accumulated knowledge, experience, and activism resulting from various processes of peace construction from the rest of the world”¹⁶ (Serrano-Amaya, 2016, p.4). Moreover, what renders the inclusion of a gender focus into both the peace talks and the final accord important is that it acknowledges “the patriarchy, machismo, and gender hierarchies as causes for violence and exclusion”¹⁷ (ibid).

One example for the wariness still prevailing among a significant number of Colombians with regard to matters of ‘gender’, as well as the opposition’s willingness to exploit these fears was the ‘march against corruption’ on April 1st 2017 in Bogotá. It was organised by the opposition and was met with suspicion by many people. Supposedly serving as an outlet for the dissatisfaction of the population with the latest corruption scandal, involving current president Santos’ election campaign (Rüb, 2017), resistance was mainly channelled towards the current peace process. Some slogans

¹⁴ “Las negociaciones con las Farc incluyeron concesiones que muchos consideran exorbitantes –como la de que los asesinos y secuestradores puedan hacer política [...] hoy, los narcotraficantes ya no tienen que demostrar su inocencia para salvarse de la cárcel y de la extradición, sino que les basta decir que fueron de las Farc para quedar en libertad”

¹⁵ From an interview with a lawyer working at Women’s Link Worldwide, 30.3.17

¹⁶ “Es un hecho con pocos precedentes en la historia de las negociaciones de paz y las transiciones políticas, y recoge el acumulado de conocimiento, experiencia y activismo resultado de diversos procesos de construcción de paz a lo largo del mundo”

¹⁷ “el patriarcado, el machismo y las jerarquías del género las causas de las violencias y la exclusión”

during the march read as “FARC are the true beneficiaries of the state” and “they stole the plebiscite from us”.¹⁸



Figure 3. Protestors during the march in Bogotá organised by the opposition on April 1st, 2017, source: author.

After briefly summarising some of the underlying factors fuelling the conflict by introducing the various actors involved in the fighting, as well as their attitudes towards women, the subsequent section aims to analyse in greater detail how gender sensitive the Final Peace Accord turned out, constituting the core analytical part of this thesis.

¹⁸ Field trip observation, 1.4.17

5. Analysis of the 2012-2016 Peace Process in Colombia from a Feminist Perspective

The Final Peace Accord between the Santos government and the FARC is structured into the following key sections: land reform, political participation, termination of the conflict, solving the problem of illicit crops, guarantees of no repetition and reparations to the victims, and steps of implementation. A gender sub-commission was tasked to review all of these sections to ensure they did not fall short of a gender dimension. Overall, the negotiating team followed the formula of “nothing is agreed until everything is agreed”¹⁹ meaning that the accord could only be accepted as a whole (Gobierno Nacional & FARC, 2016, p.5). The Final Peace Accord at 310 pages is the longest peace agreement produced in an intrastate conflict and is considerably longer than any previous peace agreement signed in the Colombian context (Bell, 2016).

The following sections seek to assess how inclusive the final version of the peace accord is as it constitutes the core document for designing a post-conflict Colombian society. The analysis proceeds by scrutinising to what extent the following four central themes, or pillars, as established by the WPS framework and summarised by George and Shepherd (2016), are found in the final peace accord. These pillars are: prevention (strategies to combat violence), participation (addressing women’s political leadership in peace and security governance), protection (of both the rights and bodies of women), relief and recovery (for conflict survivors, particularly survivors of sexualised violence in conflict). In order to measure the peace process’ compliance with the UN’s WPS agenda, each pillar has been broken down into a list of indicators which are now tested against the backdrop of the formulations found in the final peace agreement and some of the follow up DDR and TJ measures. The latter, however, are to be treated as preliminary findings since the implementation phase has only been initiated towards the end of 2016. Consequently, each of the subsequent sections begins by introducing the list of indicators making up the respective pillar under discussion, and is then followed by applying these indicators to the case of the latest Colombian peace process.

¹⁹ “nada está acordado hasta que todo esté acordado”

5.1 Pillar I – Participation

Table 1. Participation (women’s political leadership in peace and security governance)

Indicator	Resolution	Description	Compliance
1.1	1325	Participation of women at all decision making levels for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict	✓
1.2	1325	Involvement of women in implementation mechanisms of peace agreements	✓
1.3	2422	Meaningful inclusion of women in peace talk delegations	✓
1.4	1889	Gender mainstreaming approach in all post-conflict, peacebuilding, and recovery processes	✓
1.5	1889	Equal access of women and girls to education in post-conflict scenarios	✓
1.6	2122	Women’s full and equal participation in all phases of electoral processes	✓
1.7	1889	Measures to improve women’s participation especially at early stages of the process	✗
1.8	2122	Funding mechanisms to help local civil society and organisations who support women’s leadership development and participation at all decision-making levels	✗
1.9	2122	Women’s participation in efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer and misuse of small arms and light weapons	✗
1.10	2422	Support for participation of women and women’s organisations in humanitarian action	✗
1.11	1889	Measures to counter negative societal attitudes about women’s capacity to participate equally	✗

Compliance

The aim to promote the participation of women at all decision making levels for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict as envisioned in indicator 1.1 is applicable to the Colombian context. The introductory pages of the peace agreement between the Santos government and the FARC thereby state the following: “*Emphasising* that the new Final Accord pays special attention to the fundamental rights of women”²⁰ (p.3, original emphasis). With regard to overall political participation, furthermore, it strives for “the promotion of the participation and leadership of women

²⁰ “*Subrayando* que el nuevo Acuerdo Final presta especial atención a los derechos fundamentales de las mujeres”

in politics”²¹ (p.54). Moreover, it notes that both “the national government and the FARC reject any form of discrimination against women and reaffirm that the contribution of women as political subjects in public life is vital for the strengthening of democracy and for the maintenance and promotion of peace”²² (p.55). In addition to that, the agreement states that both “the national government and the FARC recognise the *important role which women play in the prevention and solution of conflicts* and in the consolidation of peace”²³ (p.55, emphasis added). Hence, the two parties recognise “the necessity to promote and invigorate the political and civic participation of women, even more so in the context of the end of the armed conflict, where their leadership and participation on equal footing are necessary and essential [...] to achieve a stable and durable peace”²⁴ (ibid).

Involving women in the implementation mechanisms of peace agreements, as set out by indicator 1.2, therefore is an integral part of the latest Colombian peace process and “the participation of women and their organisations and their equal representation in the various spaces of participation”²⁵ (ibid) are to be guaranteed by the agreement. Concerning women’s organisations’ contributions to the peace process, the two parties to the agreement reiterate their “profound gratefulness”²⁶ and stress that “with their [women’s rights organisations’ among others] participation we will achieve the construction of a stable and durable peace”²⁷ (p.9). In order for this to happen, the adoption of “specific measures to guarantee that women and men participate and benefit on an equal footing from the implementation of this accord” is considered essential (p.10) as “a society in which women participate actively is a more democratic society and the strengthening of their organisations is important”²⁸ (p.42). With regard to the

²¹ “promoción de la participación y liderazgo de la mujer en la política”

²² “El Gobierno Nacional y las FARC-EP rechazan cualquier forma de discriminación contra la mujer y reafirman que el aporte de las mujeres como sujetos políticos en la vida pública es vital para el fortalecimiento de la democracia y para el mantenimiento y el fomento de la paz”

²³ “El Gobierno Nacional y las FARC-EP reconocen el importante papel que desempeñan las mujeres en la prevención y solución de los conflictos y en la consolidación de la paz”

²⁴ “la necesidad de promover y fortalecer la participación política y ciudadana de las mujeres, aún más en el marco del fin del conflicto, donde su liderazgo y participación en pie de igualdad son necesarios y esenciales [...] para alcanzar una paz estable y duradera”

²⁵ “la participación de las mujeres y sus organizaciones y su representación equitativa en los diferentes espacios de participación”

²⁶ “profundo agradecimiento”

²⁷ “Con su participación lograremos la construcción de una paz estable y duradera”

²⁸ “una sociedad en la que las mujeres participan activamente es una sociedad más democrática, es importante el fortalecimiento de sus organizaciones”

inclusion of women in the implementation phase, the signatories to the agreement commit to respecting the gender focus at all stages of the process and with respect to all five parts of the accord (p.210). The Committee keeping track of the verification of the implementation of the final accord, moreover, will be assisted in their work by a special instance comprised of six women's rights organisations from Colombia in order to monitor compliance with the accord's gender focus during the implementation phase (p.196).

Indicator 1.3 covering the issue of women's meaningful inclusion in peace talk delegations can be considered fulfilled in the Colombian case, albeit with some delay. On the side of the government two women were nominated as plenipotentiaries (Nigeria Rentería and María Paulina Reveros) in November 2013. On behalf of the FARC women also saw a growing representation when compared to the beginning of the talks and by February 2015 made up 40 per cent of the delegation thereby reflecting the actual composition of the guerrilla group (Bouvier, 2016). *Casa de la Mujer* in their intervention to the Havana Peace Talk Round Table of December 15, 2014, notes that: "This is a historical landmark for the country and for Colombian women. For the first time in a history of talks for ending the armed conflict, we are talking as equals: the Colombian government delegates, FARC-EP, and women organisations [...] We, women, shall not be agreed on in these agreements, we want to be a party to the agreements because our voice counts" (Casmujer, 2014, p.2). As a consequence, a gender sub-commission was established with the task to revise what had already been agreed according to the criteria of a gender focus, while at the same time ensuring that any future provisions would be formulated in a gender sensitive manner.

This is in accordance with indicator 1.4 which aims at achieving a gender mainstreaming approach in all post-conflict, peacebuilding, and recovery processes. The accord defines its gender focus as "The acknowledgment of the equality of rights of men and women, and the special circumstances of each one, especially women notwithstanding their marital status, life cycle, and family or communal relations, as holders of rights and special constitutional protection [...] to promote this equality, *the active participation of women and their organisations in the construction of peace* [...] it is required to advance affirmative measures, which respond to the *disproportionate*

impacts the armed conflict had on women, in particular *sexual violence*”²⁹ (p.193, emphasis added). Consequently, the entire text of the accord has been revised to ensure that it corresponds to this definition and, furthermore, calls for adapting “differentiated actions so that women can access under equal conditions the programmes and plans contained in this accord”³⁰ (ibid).

Resulting from the work of the gender commission are provisions in the final peace agreement which comply with indicators 1.5 and 1.6. With regard to indicator 1.5, guaranteeing the equal access of women and girls to education in post-conflict scenarios, provisions can be found in the accord. Education is therefore seen as a way to facilitate and encourage women’s participation in constructing a Colombian society post-conflict and encompasses both the areas of professional training as well as the education of women on their rights. A special emphasis is hereby put on the particular conditions faced by rural women. The accord seeks to mitigate the challenges to claiming their benefits by educating women living in rural areas about their rights and their access to justice (p.18). This is supposed to be achieved by for instance promoting professional training to women in disciplines considered non-traditional to them as well as by creating more universities in rural areas accession to which is to be awarded on a non-discriminatory basis (pp.27, 32).

Additionally, in order to ensure women’s full and equal participation in electoral processes as prescribed in indicator 1.6, the final Colombian peace accord aims at establishing an expert commission with the task of elaborating advice on electoral reform. The accord, moreover, acknowledges the difficulties women encounter in conflict affected areas with regard to exercising their voting rights (p.36). In reaction to that, the accord seeks to ensure women’s access to measures such as “information campaigns, training, pedagogy and dissemination”³¹ which have as their aim the promotion of “electoral participation at the national and regional level, with special

²⁹ “el reconocimiento de la igualdad de derechos entre hombres y mujeres y de las circunstancias especiales de cada uno, especialmente de las mujeres independientemente de su estado civil, ciclo vital y relación familiar y comunitaria, como sujeto de derechos y de especial protección constitucional [...] para promover esa igualdad, la participación activa de las mujeres y sus organizaciones en la construcción de la paz [...] se requiere adelantar medidas afirmativas que respondan a los impactos desproporcionados que ha tenido el conflicto armado en las mujeres, en particular la violencia sexual”

³⁰ “acciones diferenciadas para que las mujeres puedan acceder en igualdad de condiciones a los planes y programas contenidos en este Acuerdo”

³¹ “campañas de información, capacitación, pedagogía y divulgación”

emphasis on promot[ing] greater participation of women”³² (p.51). With regard to the upcoming presidential elections, and the counterproductive consequences their results could have on the implementation of the peace accord, women’s rights organisation *Ruta Pacífica* now regards it necessary to leave the social sector to become more political in their actions. This serves the purpose of countering election campaigns based on disinformation, which are exploiting the fact that the majority of Colombians has not read the actual accord.³³ Women’s effective participation, finally, is considered important in the fight against corruption on all political levels and during election campaigns (p.48).

Non-Compliance

While there is evidence for the increased participation of women and their organisations in the official part of the peace negotiations, not all indicators with regard to the participation of women in matters of peace and security are met in the Colombian context. Indicator 1.7, for instance, which deals with the early involvement of women in the peace process, can be considered not present in the Colombian case. This is due to the fact that the participation of women, despite continuous contributions of women’s rights organisations in the years leading up to the Havana peace talks, was close to non-existent on both sides at the beginning of the talks. Almost all seats were taken by men, with the only exception of the Norwegian moderator. Each team consisted of up to 30 members and was allowed up to ten negotiators including five plenipotentiaries enjoying full negotiating power. In Cuba, however, all plenipotentiaries and with the exception of Tanja Nijmeijer, the Dutch guerrilla, all negotiators were male (Bouvier, 2016). Similarly, with regard to the previous peace processes taking place in Colombia over the past twenty years, women were completely absent (ABColombia, 2013). Change came one year into the negotiations, following a National Summit of Women for Peace in October 2013 in Bogotá initiated by a variety of women’s rights organisations, including the *Ruta Pacífica* and *Casa de la Mujer*, and backed by the UN in Colombia and UN Women Colombia.

³² “la participación electoral a nivel nacional y regional, con especial énfasis en promover una mayor participación de las mujeres”

³³ From an interview with a representative of *Ruta Pacífica Pacífica*, 24.3.17

Making sure women benefit equally from financial support and subsidies, as envisioned by indicator 1.8, is also a matter of concern in the Colombian peace agreement. In this context, rural women are singled out in need for support to realise their claims to land and subsidies and special measures to account for these needs are to be designed accordingly (p.15) to “promote the economic empowerment of rural women”³⁴ (p.31) and strengthen rural women’s rights organisations’ access to financial and technical support for their projects (p.104). Consequently, in the accord the government agrees to design and implement a plan to improve the living conditions of the country’s rural population thereby including measures to help rural women overcome barriers to financing (p.30). Generally speaking, however, while some references to the need for funding civil society organisations are found in the agreement, there are no concrete measures designed to directly help local civil society and organisations which support women’s leadership development and participation at all decision-making levels. When in need of funding, these organisations continue to address their concerns mainly in front of the UN Women in Colombia, which has been responsible for a large share of the funding.³⁵

While the gender sensitivity of Colombia’s DDR process is discussed in the next section, with regard to indicator 1.9 which seeks to measure women’s participation in efforts to combat and eradicate the illicit transfer and misuse of small arms and light weapons, no references are to be found in the peace accord. Similarly, indicator 1.10 dealing with the support for women’s participation in humanitarian action is not addressed in the final peace agreement either. Important in the Colombian context but not listed as one of the indicators of the WPS agenda, however, is the fact that the accord draws a connection between the consummation and production of illicit drugs and the issue of violence against women (p.98). As a consequence, it calls for strategies to be designed to protect women, girls, young people, and adolescents from this kind of violence and to actively involve women in the process by training and involving them in the design and follow-up actions to combat this type of violence (p.117). Illicit crop cultivation and the drug trade are criticised as a source of violence fostering an overall

³⁴ “promover el empoderamiento económico de las mujeres rurales”

³⁵ From an interview with a representative of UN Women Colombia, 28.3.17

climate of hostility and intolerance and the accord explicitly blames “stereotypes related to drug trafficking which incite gender-based violence”³⁶ (p.120).

In relation to that, indicator 1.11 deals with the important issue of designing measures to counter negative societal attitudes about women’s capacity to participate equally. While several references to the need to create an open and tolerant society in order to avoid the stigmatisation of women and other vulnerable segments of the population are to be found in the accord, the formulations remain vague and the proposed actions lack clarity. References on this need are to be found, for instance, in the context of establishing a national Council for Reconciliation and Coexistence aimed at assisting the government in the prevention of “stigmatisation of vulnerable or discriminated against groups such as women”³⁷ (p.47) while at the same time empowering leaders of social organisations and movements to avoid their stigmatisation. Moreover, the new system aimed at ensuring the participation and freedom of expression of political opposition “has to contribute to create and guarantee a culture of coexistence, tolerance and solidarity [...] to prevent any form of stigmatisation and persecution of leaders on grounds of their political activities”³⁸ (p.38). Furthermore, “the new system will incorporate special measures for women including the positive valuation of their public participation”³⁹ (ibid). Hence, this system seeks the “support, through legal and technical assistance, the creation and strengthening of organisations and social movements [...] with extraordinary measures for women's organisations [...] and groups historically discriminated against”⁴⁰ (p.43). In 2010, female activists working in Colombia in fields of land, labour, or indigenous rights were considered at the highest risk worldwide to be threatened or murdered (ABColombia, 2013). Recent developments, moreover, show that this trend is far from

³⁶ “estereotipos relacionados con el narcotráfico que incitan la violencia de género”

³⁷ “estigmatización a grupos en condiciones de vulnerabilidad o discriminados como las mujeres”

³⁸ “debe contribuir a crear y garantizar una cultura de convivencia, tolerancia y solidaridad [...] para prevenir cualquier forma de estigmatización y persecución de dirigentes por motivo de sus actividades políticas”

³⁹ “El nuevo Sistema incorporará medidas especiales para las mujeres incluyendo la valoración positiva de su participación en lo público”

⁴⁰ “Apoyar, mediante asistencia legal y técnica, la creación y el fortalecimiento de las organizaciones y movimientos sociales [...] con medidas extraordinarias a las organizaciones de mujeres [...] y de grupos históricamente discriminados”

being reversed: being the leader or member of a political or social movement in Colombia remains dangerous.⁴¹

⁴¹ From an interview with a representative from ODHACO, 7.4.17

5.2 Pillar II – Prevention

Table 2. Prevention (strategies to combat violence).

Indicator	Resolution	Description	Compliance
2.1	1325, 1889	Gender sensitivity of DDR process / measures	✓
2.2	1820	Efforts to debunk myths fuelling sexual violence	✗
2.3	1820	Measures to sensitise troops on the matter of sexual violence	✗
2.4	1820	Vetting of armed and security forces against the background of past actions of sexual violence	✗
2.5	1888	Measures undertaken by civilian superiors and military commanders to prevent sexual violence	✗

Compliance

The accord refers to the need to create an atmosphere in Colombia characterized by inclusion and explicitly links a lack of openness and tolerance to violence in its different forms. Subsequently, it seeks to promote “a culture of respect for disagreement and the interest in the prevention of violence against the ones exercising politics”⁴² (p.38). Furthermore, prevention of further violence in all its forms constitutes a “superior goal”⁴³ (p.186). While indicator 2.1 could also fall under the previous one dealing with matters of participation, it is included in the second pillar covering prevention. This is due to the fact that a successful DDR process is essential in preventing future violent escalation among the different segments of Colombia’s population. A DDR process and its three stages, according to UN Peacekeeping, can be summarised as follows:

⁴² “una cultura de respeto por la diferencia y el interés por la prevención de la violencia contra quienes ejercen la política”

⁴³ “objetivo superior”

Table 3. DDR Process Overview according to the UN.

- | |
|---|
| <p>1.) “Disarmament is the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons from combatants and often from the civilian population.”</p> <p>2.) “Demobilization is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces and groups, including a phase of ‘reinsertion’ which provides short-term assistance to ex-combatants.”</p> <p>3.) “Reintegration is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. It is a political, social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level.”</p> |
|---|

The challenges inherent to DDR processes are manifold and often fail to adopt a gender perspective. Consequently, measures are more tailored towards male ex-combatants, leaving behind their female companions (UN Global Study, 2015). Some of the challenges former combatants might face are similar for both women and men, others are specific to women. One example of this is the families or societies to where these female ex-combatants are returning to, can stigmatize or punish them for breaking with traditional gender roles. This uncertainty can be exacerbated in situations in which women are uneducated, poor, pregnant, or have small children to take care of. In this context, it is interesting to note that as the FARC is starting to demobilize and hand over their weapons to the UN, an emphasis by Colombian and German online newspapers is put on the fact that there are an increasing number of pregnant women and newborns to be found in these transitional zones. The *niños de la paz*, the children of the peace, are considered a definite sign that the armed conflict has come to an end with peace under way as women are leaving behind their role as combatant and become mothers instead (Rendón Marulanda, 2017; Spiegel, 2017).

Moreover, “men and women will need to work together to negotiate new identities and to create new understandings about what it means to be a man or a woman in a society at peace” (Bouvier, 2016, p. 25). In a society as the Colombian one “where violence against women has been tacitly accepted as a norm, the best approaches to prevention and protection require building a new culture that respects and empowers women” which includes “engaging women in visible leadership roles in the design and implementation of DDR programs” (ibid). This is where the important topic of mental

health comes into play as it is necessary to address the challenge of trauma both with regard to former combatants and other victims of the conflict. Concerns exist that these traumas, if unsolved, can potentially generate new violence in times of peace as the victims, according to the International Red Cross, “also carry scars in their heads”⁴⁴ (Casmujer, 2017).

With regard to monitoring the ceasefire, the agreement accounts for women’s organisations as potential contributors (p.232) and, moreover, calls for employing monitoring personnel equipped for dealing with cases of violence against women and sexual violence in particular (p.233). Additionally, several references are found for the monitoring mission to take into account the particular medical needs of women (pp.258-60) as well as their logistic needs which might differ from those of men (p.269). However, this is without further specifying what these different needs entail and which measures are to be designed to meet them adequately. Whereas it is too early into the overall DDR process to draw definite conclusions, women belong to the ones monitoring the current disarmament of guerrilla fighters in the frame of close cooperation between the UN, the Colombian government, and the FARC (Colombia 2020, 2017).

With regard to the reintegration of former FARC fighters into civilian life, the accord states that “the process of reincorporation will have a differentiated focus in all its components with an emphasis on the rights of women”⁴⁵ (p.69). Within the Colombian Agency for Reintegration, moreover, women accounted for 57 per cent of the staff and 60 per cent of the contractor positions in 2014. However, “they have yet to break the glass ceiling in the organisation” (Bouvier, 2016, p.25). Whereas drawing definite conclusions on compliance with the first indicator of the prevention Pillar is not yet possible at this point, it can be noted that first steps towards a more gender-sensitive DDR process have been initiated by the accord.

⁴⁴“ también llevan las cicatrices de la violencia en la cabeza”

⁴⁵ “El proceso de reincorporación tendrá en todos sus componentes un enfoque diferencial, con énfasis en los derechos de las mujeres”

Non-Compliance

Tackling the underlying causes of violence is understood to be the best prevention of its further escalation. Nonetheless, when it comes to translating these into tangible measures to hold responsible the armed security forces, the police, or the state's military leaders, provisions of this sort are omitted from the final peace agreement. One example for this is indicator 2.2 which deals with efforts to debunk myths fuelling sexual violence. Some level of recognition of this problem has taken place in Colombia as seen in the context of the 'Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment', according to which Colombian leaders commit to "work for the construction of new masculinities [...] to search for the full inclusion of men and boys with regard to the responsibility to achieve gender equality"⁴⁶ (Global Leaders, 2015, p.4). Successful examples of these policies on a level closer to the everyday lives of Colombians, nevertheless, remain scarce and often face resistance among the population (Sanchez A., 2017). While the peace agreement mentions strategies of raising awareness of the situation of vulnerability of women to promote "actions to sensitise and guide the community and the institutions to prevent the stigmatization of the beneficiaries, which take into account [...] the differentiated impact on women"⁴⁷ (p.119), no explicit references to measures aimed at debunking myths fuelling sexual violence are to be found in the final peace agreement.

In a similar vein, the three subsequent indicators on vetting the armed security forces against the background of past actions of sexual violence (2.3), measures to sensitise troops on the matter of sexual violence (2.4), as well as measures undertaken by civilian superiors and military commanders, to prevent sexual violence (2.5), are not mentioned in the peace agreement. In Colombia, the issue of sexual violence in connection with the state's armed forces cannot be discussed in isolation from the problem of paramilitarism. As noted in one of the previous sections, the Colombian state is deeply entrenched with the paramilitary forces, which have officially demobilized but continue to commit grave human rights violations in the form of

⁴⁶ "Trabajar por la construcción de nuevas masculinidades [...] para buscar la inclusión plena de los hombres y niños en la responsabilidad de lograr la igualdad entre los géneros"

⁴⁷ "Acciones para sensibilizar y guiar a la comunidad y a las instituciones para prevenir la estigmatización de los consumidores y las consumidoras, que tengan en cuenta [...] el impacto diferenciado en las mujeres"

dissident groups. Consequently, addressing this issue is considered highly sensitive. The accord, nevertheless, does acknowledge the issue of paramilitarism and recognizes the criminal structures originating from this phenomenon as the one of the main spoilers of peace thereby endangering the successful implementation of the accord (p.8).

Subsequently, the government is entrusted with the task to develop measures to shed light on what gives rise to the phenomenon of paramilitarism (p.77) as well as to guarantee the enactment of measures necessary to protect human rights defenders during the implementation of the accord (pp.78, 82). Hence, a special unit is expected to lead investigations on the links between criminal successor organisations of the paramilitaries and the state's civil servants (p.85). Moreover, the government is required to initiate the legislative process to prohibit the promotion or financing of paramilitary structures while including mechanisms to prosecute violations of these provisions into the constitution (p.80).

The provision coming closest to the envisioned vetting of armed forces, again forming part of the special unit, states that said unit “will propose mechanisms for the background check of public servants in all state institutions with the purpose of verifying any involvement these might have had with groups and/or activities of paramilitarism or human right violations”⁴⁸ (p.82) in order to guarantee the no repetition of the phenomenon of paramilitarism (pp.39, 83). To achieve this aim, the national government is expected to initiate legislative reforms needed to sanction political parties and their candidates to be found guilty of cooperating with criminal networks including those stemming from former paramilitary groups (p.96). To this end, former members of paramilitary groups are invited to join the commission on clarification, coexistence and no repetition as part of the Special Jurisdiction for Peace (JEP Spanish acronym) to contribute to the process of illuminating the phenomenon of paramilitarism (p.171). The investigations are aimed at establishing penal responsibility of the persons involved in criminal networks originating in a paramilitary past (p.85). Furthermore, the commission's mandate, is supposed to achieve the prosecution of paramilitary successor organisations, especially with regard to systematic violence committed against women

⁴⁸ “Propondrá los mecanismos para la revisión de antecedentes de los servidores/as públicos en todas las instituciones del Estado con el fin de verificar cualquier involucramiento que hayan tenido los anteriores con grupos y/o actividades de paramilitarismo o violaciones de Derechos Humanos”

in particular (p.83).

Nonetheless, no remarks related to vetting any actors involved with paramilitary activities and more specifically with regard to conflict-related sexual violence as envisioned in the WPS indicators are to be found. This is not surprising due to the deep entrenchment of paramilitaries, BACRIMS, and the state's armed forces. Dismissing allegations that his ministry had been aware of paramilitary groups establishing a presence in territories designated as pre-assembly sites for the demobilizing FARC fighters, Defence Minister Luis Carlos Villegas went as far as announcing that "there is no paramilitarism in Colombia"⁴⁹, as arguing otherwise "would mean granting political recognition to bandits dedicated to common or organised delinquency"⁵⁰ (Colprensa, 2017). Downplaying this problem, however, is dangerous. The failure of the government to acknowledge its responsibility in facilitating the human rights violations committed by the paramilitaries or by its own armed forces will only prolong the conflict. One telling example of this is the *falsos positivos* scandal. State-armed forces carried out extrajudicial killings of civilians during the period of 2002-2008 and dressed the corpses in the uniforms of guerrilla fighters in order to boost up numbers of combat fatalities and collect rewards. Research suggests that awareness of this practice reached up to the highest levels of the Colombian military (HRW, 2015).

Subsequently, when looking at the situation of keeping up command responsibility and the measures undertaken by civilian and military leaders to sensitise their troops or the general population more broadly on the topic of sexual violence, the picture remains bleak. In the past, these leaders, have successfully avoided punishment for a significant number of crimes committed in relation to the armed conflict⁵¹ and have largely succeeded in promoting a very light version of command responsibility.⁵² In Colombia, sexual related crimes have an impunity rate of 98 per cent which contributes to a significant extent to the repetition of these crimes (ABColumbia, 2013).

⁴⁹ "En Colombia no hay paramilitarismo"

⁵⁰ "significaría otorgar un reconocimiento político a unos bandidos dedicados a la delincuencia común u organizada"

⁵¹ For a discussion on the demobilization process of the paramilitaries and the TJ measures they faced see for example Monteiro Dario, 2015

⁵² From an interview with a lawyer working at Women's Link Worldwide, 30.3.17

5.3 Pillar III - Protection

Table 4. Protection (of both the rights and bodies of women).

Indicator	Resolution	Description	Compliance
3.1	1325	Protection of women's and girls' human rights	✓
3.2	2106	Address sexual violence concerns with regard to: justice sector reform	✓
3.3	1820	Protection of women and girls in imminent threat of sexual violence	✗
3.4	1325	Measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence (all forms of sexual abuse and violence)	✗
3.5	2106	Include sexual violence in definition of acts prohibited by ceasefires and in provisions for ceasefire monitoring	✗
3.6	2106	Address sexual violence concerns with regard to: DDR	✗
3.7	2106	Address sexual violence concerns with regard to: SSR	✗

Compliance

In the context of indicator 3.1, references to the need to protect both the rights and bodies of women are numerous in the final peace agreement, and the influence of women's rights organisations on the drafting becomes visible. Often these references are to be found in the context of discussing gender-based or sexual violence, and on many occasions intersect with the pillar of 'relief and recovery'. The agreement successfully distinguishes between different kinds of women, and instead of focusing on 'women' in general, it singles out the ones in need of special protection such as rural women, women belonging to the LGBTI community, female heads of households, social movement leaders, and women's rights organisations. Protection of their physical and psychological integrity is regarded paramount in ensuring their effective participation in the social and political life of their communities (pp.40, 86). The category 'women and children', which has been criticised as simply lumping together two distinct issues depicting women as vulnerable and neglecting their contributions as

agents of change, is not particularly prevalent in the peace agreement. Some of these references are to be found (for example: pp.12, 128, 144, 187) but the gender focus of the agreement stretches beyond ‘women and children’ in need of protection.

In the part of the agreement discussing the conditions governing the end of the conflict, the gender focus is described as putting a “special emphasis on the protection of women, girls, boys, and adolescents”⁵³ and thereby “will take into account the specific risks which women face against their life, liberty, integrity and security”⁵⁴ and that the measures therefore will be designed “adequately for said risks”⁵⁵ (p.79). This approach to the ‘special needs’ of women due to their ‘particular vulnerability’ can be observed throughout all six parts of the accord (see for example: pp.12, 54, p.134). These ‘special needs’ refer, among others, to special needs of nutrition (p.11) or the special risks they face due to the “feminine condition”⁵⁶ of their health (p.258). Women and the human rights violations they have endured over the course of the fighting take other forms “such as sexual violence, the psychological effects, or simply the co-existence with fear”⁵⁷ (p.126). However, they might be “less visible but not less painful”⁵⁸(ibid).

Closely related to this is indicator 3.2, dealing with addressing sexual violence concerns with regard to the reform of the country’s justice sector. Whereas a complete overhaul of this sector is not deemed necessary, shortcomings with regard to how crimes of sexual violence are handled can be observed. The final peace agreement seeks to take this into consideration when establishing the Special Jurisdiction whose basic principles point towards the special situation of women and victims of sexual violence. Generally speaking, however, the gap between theory and practice in the Colombian context renders assessing compliance with the majority of indicators listed above problematic. When looking at the peace agreement alone, few of the requirements are met. Including some of the previous laws enacted to protect and compensate the victims of sexual violence, nonetheless, makes the situation of Colombian women appear better only on paper. While there is no lack of judicial means and initiatives to address the

⁵³ “especial énfasis en la protección de mujeres, niñas, niños y adolescentes”

⁵⁴ “tendrá en cuenta los riesgos específicos que enfrentan las mujeres contra su vida, libertad, integridad y seguridad”

⁵⁵ “adecuadas a dichos riesgos”

⁵⁶ “sus necesidades específicas, así como los riesgos propios de su condición femenina”

⁵⁷ “como la violencia sexual, las afectaciones psicológicas, o la simple convivencia con el miedo”

⁵⁸ “menos visibles pero no menos dolorosas”

issue of violence against women, their implementation remains flawed. One example of this is indicator 3.4, which deals with measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence. While a number of laws to protect women exist, such as the Order 092 issued by the Colombian Constitutional Court, acknowledging the particular vulnerability of rural women especially with regard to crimes of sexual violence, implementation rates are low which reinforces the overall climate of impunity accompanying these crimes (ABColumbia, 2013).

Non-Compliance

Regarding indicator 3.5 which strives for the inclusion of sexual violence in the definition of acts prohibited by ceasefires and in provisions for ceasefire monitoring, no explicit mention of this issue is to be found in neither the preliminary General Agreement on the termination of the conflict and building of a stable and lasting peace signed by the FARC and the Santos government in Havana in 2012 (Gobierno Nacional & FARC, 2016) nor the final version of the peace agreement of November 2016 (p.58). A lack of compliance also concerns indicators 3.6 and 3.7 covering the need to address sexual violence concerns with regard to DDR and security sector reform (SSR) respectively. In Colombia, trust in the state's security forces is low and their involvement in acts of sexual violence further deteriorates their relationship with the general population (Hörtner, 2013).

Whereas the state's security forces are expected to protect the population, they do not live up to their responsibility and Colombia's Human Rights Ombudsman clarifies that "even if cases of sexual violence against women perpetrated by the Security Forces do not correspond to a war strategy (...), they constitute a generalised practice that takes advantage of the conditions of subordination of women, their precarious economic conditions resulting from lack of protection by the State, and the acceptance of existing ideas in the local culture, such as a woman's body is an object that belongs to men" (as cited in ABColumbia, 2013, pp.1-2). Since 2010, according to the Ministry of Defence, an official zero tolerance policy for this kind of behaviour exists. However, the UN deems the ministry's approach inadequate as sanctions are not enforced effectively thereby contributing to the overall climate of impunity with regard to crimes of sexual violence. SSR is therefore often considered crucial to regain the

population's trust and enable lasting conflict resolution as the "failure to engage in vetting, including for sexual and gender-based crimes, puts societies at risk of further violence from dangerous actors, constitutes a significant barrier to seeking justice assistance from the State, erodes public faith and confidence in rule-of-law institutions, marginalizes victims and sends the message that gender-based and sexual violence is socially acceptable" (UN Global Study, 2015, p.179). The state's police and military forces' compliance, however, is instrumental for protecting and advancing economic interests of the country's political elites, therefore rendering the deeply needed SSR one of the most sensitive issues in relation to the country's current peace building process. SSR in Colombia is highly controversial and "the fact that the Ministry of Defence refuses to talk about SSR [...] is suggestive"⁵⁹ and so highlights "the urgency of a public debate on this touchy subject"⁶⁰ (Tickner, 2017).

⁵⁹ "El hecho de que el MDN se rehúsa a hablar de RSS [...] es sugerente"

⁶⁰ "la urgencia de un debate público sobre este quisquilloso tema"

5.4 Pillar IV - Relief and Recovery

Table 5. Relief and Recovery (for conflict survivors, particularly survivors of sexual violence in conflict)

Indicator	Resolution	Description	Compliance
4.1	2106	Address sexual violence in armed conflict in mediation efforts, ceasefires, and peace agreements and include women, women's organisations, and survivors of sexual violence in the process	✓
4.2	1889	Collection of data on and analysis and assessment of particular needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations	✓
4.3	1820	End impunity, exclude from amnesty provisions, and prosecute those responsible for sexual violence	✓
4.4	2242	Access to justice for women in (post-) conflict situations including reparations for victims of sexual and gender-based violence	✓
4.5	1325	Gender perspective in peace agreement negotiations and implementation with regard to issues of repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, and reintegration	✓
4.6	1888	Access to health care, psychosocial support, legal assistance and socio economic reintegration services for victims of sexual violence, in particular in rural areas	✓
4.7	2106	Provide sustainable assistance to women and girls living with or affected by HIV and AIDS in (post-)conflict situations	✗

Compliance

Indicator 4.1 seeks to raise awareness of sexual violence in armed conflict in mediation efforts, ceasefires, and peace agreements while including women, women's organisations, and survivors of sexual violence in the process. Since the accord's provisions regarding sexual violence have been discussed in previous pillars, this pillar's first indicator focuses more on the role of the victims during the peace process and drafting of the agreement. Moreover, whereas the inclusion of women's organisations into the process has been discussed already with regard to Pillar I,

victims' organisations also played an integral part in the process. Consequently, the accord acknowledges that more than 3000 victims participated in four forums throughout Colombia organised by the UN and 70 victims travelled to Havana to testify before the official negotiators to offer their recommendations and personal insights on the victims' needs. Overall, more than 17,000 suggestions were handed in by victims of the conflict to the official peace talk delegations in Havana following what later became of core importance to the final peace agreement namely that "the redress of the victims has to be at the centre of any agreement"⁶¹(p.126).

The Colombian state, furthermore, in the form of Law 1448 of 2011, known as the Victims and Land Restitution Law, has not only "acknowledged responsibility for victims' well-being" but has "recognized them as rights holders" (Dixon, 2016, p.16); it has registered close to 16 percent of the country's population as official victims of the internal armed conflict and so entitled to assistance and reparations. Victim eligibility to compensation is not based on the identity of the perpetrator but on the fact whether the damage has been caused by the internal conflict in general. In the long run, this serves to create a society in which "co-existence consists not in the mere sharing of the same social and political space but instead in the creation of a transformative environment which allows for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and the creation of the broadest culture of respect and tolerance"⁶² (p.131). In the end, this "will promote an environment of dialogue and will create spaces in which the victims see themselves dignified, in which individual and collective recognition of responsibility will take place, and in general, respect and confidence [...] the equality of opportunities between men and women [...] will consolidate themselves"⁶³ (ibid). The conclusion is drawn that with "the construction of a peace based on truth"⁶⁴ as the ultimate goal "the understanding and recognition of a bloody past has to be taken on in order to be overcome"⁶⁵ (ibid).

The end of the conflict is considered "a unique opportunity to satisfy one of the

⁶¹ "el resarcimiento de las víctimas debería estar en el centro de cualquier acuerdo"

⁶² "la convivencia no consiste en el simple compartir de un mismo espacio social y político, sino en la creación de un ambiente transformador que permita la resolución pacífica de los conflictos y la construcción de la más amplia cultura de respeto y tolerancia"

⁶³ "promoverá un ambiente de diálogo y creará espacios en los que las víctimas se vean dignificadas, se hagan reconocimientos individuales y colectivos de responsabilidad, y en general se consoliden el respeto y la confianza [...] la igualdad de oportunidades entre hombres y mujeres"

⁶⁴ "la construcción de una paz basada en la verdad"

⁶⁵ "el conocimiento y reconocimiento de un pasado cruento que debe ser asumido para ser superado"

greatest desires of the Colombian society and of the victims in particular: that the truth about what happened during the conflict be clarified and known. Colombia needs to know what happened, and what should never happen again [...] to finally break the cycles of violence which have characterized the history of Colombia”⁶⁶ (p.130). This desire to know the truth and to understand what has occurred during the decades of conflict cuts through all layers of Colombian society and needs to be addressed satisfactorily if the country is to move on. When asked during a seminar on German and Colombian *lieux de memoire* organised by the Goethe Institute in Bogotá on March 17, 2017, if the people in Colombia grew tired of constantly discussing the conflict, and would instead prefer to stress other parts of the country’s history such as its diverse indigenous traditions, participants pointed out that the situation in Colombia was not comparable to the one in Germany. Everything which had happened during the Holocaust had been revealed and discussed critically: “In Colombia we are still searching for the truth”. One of my interview partners stressed something similar by stating that “sometimes all the victims need to know is *why* it happened”.⁶⁷ Consequently, the measures of reparation are to be designed in close cooperation with victims’ organisations and are supposed to “respond to the expectations of the victims of the conflict [...] avoid revictimisation and empower the victims”⁶⁸ (p.178).

In order for these measures to meet the actual needs of victims, collecting data on women’s and girls’ particular needs in post-conflict situations is essential. Compliance with this requirement is requested by this pillar’s indicator 4.2. This practice is considered important, as gender is often rendered invisible in statistics and often a lack of awareness, with regard to the specific challenges women face, persists. This lack of data then results in the design and implementation of policies not tailored towards the actual needs of the female parts of a post-conflict population. The accord seeks to mitigate this shortcoming by, for example, tackling the issue of electoral participation of the most vulnerable people by “promoting a broad gender-focused participatory exercise of analysis on the obstacles these populations encounter when

⁶⁶“una oportunidad única para satisfacer uno de los mayores deseos de la sociedad colombiana y de las víctimas en particular: que se esclarezca y conozca la verdad sobre lo ocurrido en el conflicto. Colombia necesita saber qué pasó y qué no debe volver a suceder nunca más [...] a romper definitivamente los ciclos de violencia que han caracterizado la historia de Colombia.”

⁶⁷ From an interview with a lawyer working at Women’s Link Worldwide, 30.3.17

⁶⁸ “respondan a las expectativas de las víctimas del conflicto [...] eviten la revictimización y empoderen a las víctimas”

exercising their right to vote, and adopt the corresponding measures”⁶⁹ (p.51) and more precisely with regard to the situation of women: “This system will include specific information on the risks and threats against the participation and political, social, and communal representation of women”⁷⁰ (p.40). The work of the very first Women’s Truth and Memory Commission convened by *Ruta Pacífica* in December 2013 constitutes an early example of this gathering of information.

A significant step to end impunity and exclude crimes of sexual violence from amnesty provisions, as envisioned in this pillar’s indicator 4.3, has been made with the recent establishment of the JEP and Truth Commission to enable the victims of the conflict to find closure with their suffering during decades of conflict: “it’s a huge opportunity for women to get justice”⁷¹ as it is the first time a commission like this exists in a formal setting. What distinguishes the Special Jurisdiction from the normal jurisdiction is its unique approach to sanction “which includes the restriction of liberty, but adopts a reparatory and restorative approach” including for instance “measures such as: participation in victim reparation programs, environmental protection, infrastructure construction and reparation, implementation of rural development programs, and removal and cleaning of explosive war remains and antipersonnel mines” (Sanchez Leon, 2016, p.175). However, this applies only to those who have actively participated in the JEP’s truth component thereby acknowledging their personal responsibility. In a similar manner, “the fight against impunity”⁷² and the “measures of clarification of the truth and of reparation [...] are required to contribute to the prevention [...] of new violations, and is a fundamental guarantee for the no repetition of violations [...] of the definitive termination of the violence under which the country has suffered because of the conflict”⁷³ (p.187). References to women’s special status can be found when discussing the question of reparations especially for the survivors of conflict-related sexual violence (p.193), with no references to men or boys as victims of sexual violence

⁶⁹ “Promover un ejercicio ampliamente participativo de diagnóstico con enfoque de género, de los obstáculos que enfrentan estas poblaciones en el ejercicio del derecho al voto, y adoptar las medidas correspondientes”

⁷⁰ “Este sistema incluirá información específica sobre los riesgos y amenazas contra la participación y la representación política, social y comunitaria de las mujeres”

⁷¹ From an interview with a lawyer working at Women’s Link Worldwide, 30.3.17

⁷² “la lucha contra la impunidad”

⁷³ “las medidas de esclarecimiento de la verdad y de reparación [...] debecontribuir a la prevención [...] de nuevas violaciones, y es una garantía fundamental de la no repetición de las violaciones [...] de la terminación definitiva de la violencia que por razón del conflicto ha sufrido el país”

to be found.

In accordance with the indicator 4.3, rape and other forms of sexual violence, are excluded from amnesty provisions (pp.151, 295) and prosecution for these crimes is rendered impossible to avoid - theoretically speaking (pp.304-8). Consequently, the perpetrators of crimes related to any form of sexual violence are excluded from the alternative sanctions established by the JEP thereby fulfilling both indicator 4.3 as well as Colombia's obligations under international law and the Rome Statute (pp. 104, 304-8). The basic principles of the section dealing with establishing the JEP, moreover, state that the consequences for committing human rights violations are to be stronger when those violations have been committed against women (p.144). While certainly drafted with the aim of raising awareness and achieving justice, an approach like this bears the danger of establishing a hierarchy of victims which might, in the end, complicate the process of reconciliation. Hence, *Ruta Pacífica* raises similar concerns and stresses that from their point of view there should be no hierarchy of suffering and efforts should be directed at combating all types of violations of women's rights and bodies. Consequently, it is not considered advisable to single out sexual violence as worse than other types of violence.⁷⁴

Looking at the establishment of the JEP from a more critical angle, however, one could argue that it risks sending a "contradictory message to society and victims: while increasing penalties in the ordinary justice system for comparable actions [...] the transitional justice mechanisms will involve a more drastic diminution, than the increases demanded for in the ordinary justice system. Consequently, the victims will receive the message that their damage will be recognised as more or less grave according to who the author of the crime is, at the same time, the aggressor will understand that in any case it will be better to have committed a crime while having declared oneself belonging to an armed group"⁷⁵ (Casmujer, 2013, p.13). Despite potential shortcomings, the JEP is considered crucial in any efforts dedicated to end the

⁷⁴ From an interview with a representative of *Ruta Pacífica*, 24.3.17

⁷⁵ "un mensaje contradictorio hacia la sociedad y hacia las víctimas: Al mismo tiempo que se incrementa la rigurosidad de las penas en justicia ordinaria, frente a hechos similares [...] los mecanismos de justicia transicional implicarán una disminución, incluso más drástica que los aumentos demandados en justicia ordinaria. De esta manera, las víctimas recibirán un mensaje por el cual su daño será reconocido como más o menos grave de acuerdo a la calidad del autor y al mismo tiempo el agresor entenderá que en todo caso será mejor para sí el haber cometido un crimen habiéndose declarado perteneciente a un grupo armado"

culture of impunity surrounding crimes related to sexual violence (p.8) and a special unit composed of both men and women is to be set up to investigate these cases (p.169). Whereas one can welcome that the final peace agreement refers to the fight against impunity on several occasions (pp.39, 127, 187), it remains to be seen whether these provisions will translate into tangible results.

Reparations and access to justice, as described in indicator 4.4, constitute one possibility to deliver these tangible results for the victims of the armed conflict and form an integral part of any TJ regime. The end of the conflict is described as a unique window of opportunity “to materialise the victims’ rights to truth, justice, reparation and no repetition and in general to guarantee complete fulfilment of human rights of *everyone* in Colombia, including women’s rights”⁷⁶ (p.189, emphasis added). Transitional Justice as defined by the UN deals with “the full range of processes and mechanisms associated with a society’s attempts to come to terms with a legacy of large-scale past abuses, in order to ensure accountability serves justice and achieves reconciliation” (UNSC, 2004). Reparations can broadly be defined as “measures provided by a wrongdoing party out of obligation to redress the harm caused to an injured party” (Dixon, 2016, p.89) and are not necessarily restricted to materialistic measures: “for victims, justice is an experience. It is as much about the way that they are treated, consulted and respected procedurally throughout the reparation process, as it is about the substantive remedy, material or otherwise, they may be granted as part of the end result” (REDRESS as cited in Dixon, 2016, p.99).

What makes the Colombian case special is the central role victims got to play during the entire process, swiftly combining assistance with reparation measures in what Peter Dixon (2016) terms a “subsistence model”. This model is based on state responsibility and seeks to first stabilize the situation of the victims for them “to achieve a level of basic subsistence” (p.103), to be better suited to fully appreciate the following reparation measures, which aim at promoting a culture of reconciliation, “because reparations are seen as more transformative than assistance and because victims must attain a certain level of stability to receive reparations measures” (Dixon, 2016, p.103). Reparations are defined as “restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and

⁷⁶ “para materializar los derechos de las víctimas a la verdad, la justicia, la reparación y la no repetición, y en general asegurar la satisfacción plena de los derechos humanos *de todos y todas*, incluyendo los de las mujeres”

guarantees of non-repetition”, whereas assistance is defined as “measures to fulfil immediate needs for food, medicine and housing [...] to help victims achieve a more stable life situation” and to help them “fulfil their rights to access truth, justice and reparation”. Accordingly, the Colombian state has provided 473 257 victims with reparation payments and 1 184 418 with assistance (Dixon, 2016, p.94).

While the successful implementation of reparation programmes face certain obstacles such as “high expenses, the need to gather potentially unavailable evidence, the pain associated with cross-examination and victims’ lack of confidence in judicial systems still untransformed by political transition” these problems of effectively reaching out to victims are exacerbated for female victims and “for some victims who are more likely to be female than male, such as the victims of sexual violence” (Rubio-Marín & de Greiff, 2007, p.322). The warring parties in the Colombian conflict have sought to address this issue and have structured the peace process between them in a way that puts an emphasis on a restorative approach to justice instead of focusing on retribution. For the current peace efforts to stand a chance, it is required “that the society would know everything that happened, how it happened, why it happened and who did it [...] so that they would realize that neither rebellion nor the defence of democracy nor anti-communism justify much of what they have done and, above all, that they account themselves for their actions before the millions of civilians who they have made endure the whole list of crimes of the Rome Statute”⁷⁷ (Sierra Restrepo, 2017). Consequently, the accord points out that these reparations have to be designed in correspondence with UN guidelines as well as with the gender focus, taking into account the particular suffering of women (p.144).

⁷⁷ “Que la sociedad toda sepa qué pasó, cómo pasó, por qué pasó y quién lo hizo [...] para que reconozcan que ni la rebelión, ni la defensa de la democracia ni el anticomunismo justifican mucho de lo que hicieron y, sobre todo, para que rindan cuentas transparentes ante los millones de civiles a los que hicieron padecer la lista entera de crímenes del Estatuto de Roma.”



Figure 4. The Centre of Memory, Reconciliation and Peace, Bogotá; source: author.

Correspondingly, the indicator 4.5 aims at introducing a gender perspective in peace agreement negotiations and the agreements' implementation with regard to issues of repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, and reintegration. Again, assessing compliance with this indicator is rendered difficult due to the timing of the research and no definite conclusions can be drawn. However, some provisions are found in the accord with regard to the rural and displaced populations' needs as well as to matters of their reintegration and rehabilitation. Hence, the accord notes the need to "broaden and improve the access and the offer in care and qualified assistance [...] including treatment and rehabilitation and [...] among others, affirmative measures for women"⁷⁸ (p.119). Moreover, the accord notes that every national plan related to collective reparations, under which the issues of repatriation, resettlement, rehabilitation, and reintegration fall, will have a gender focus and will be directed, among others, at women's organisations (p.180). The government, furthermore, promises to "increase the coverage and improve the quality of strategies of communal rehabilitation for the reconstruction of the social fabric [...] re-establishing the trust between public authorities and communities, and promote the co-existence within communities including the victims, ex-members of paramilitary organisations, members of the FARC in the process of reincorporation into

⁷⁸ "ampliar y mejorar el acceso y la oferta en atención y asistencia cualificada [...] incluyendo el tratamiento y la rehabilitación, y [...], entre otros, medidas afirmativas para las mujeres"

civilian life”⁷⁹(pp.181-2) with all the resulting strategies to incorporate a gender focus. The government, hence, will take measures to strengthen communal human rights defenders “with the aim that these will accompany in an effective manner the process of land return, return and relocation of displaced persons and victims abroad, including refugees and persons living in exile”⁸⁰ (p.184) including victims’ organisations in the design and implementation process. Overall, the “gender focus will have to be understood and applied in a crosscutting manner which covers the accord’s implementation in its entirety”⁸¹ (p.194). Order 092 and Law 1448 go hand in hand with this approach and the goals set out in indicator 4.5. These two judicial means already existed prior to the final peace agreement to tackle the various challenges displaced women face, paying particular attention to the issue of sexual violence to which this group of women is particularly exposed.

Indicator 4.6 deals with the important issues of providing women with access to health care, psychosocial support, legal assistance, and socio economic reintegration services for victims of sexual violence especially in rural areas. With regard to health and psychosocial care, the accord calls for “the adoption of a differentiated gender focus which is to take into account the health requirements of women in correspondence with their life cycle, including measures on sexual and reproductive health, psychosocial care and special measures for pregnant women”⁸² (p.26). With regard to the additional vulnerability of the rural population, the accord, furthermore, calls for the creation of a model specifically dedicated to improving public health in rural locations (ibid). The beneficiaries of this process therefore “will receive technical and financial support for the reconstruction of their lives and income generation strategies”⁸³ (p.184). Similarly,

⁷⁹ “aumentar la cobertura y elevar la calidad de las estrategias de rehabilitación comunitaria para la reconstrucción del tejido social [...] restableciendo las relaciones de confianza entre las autoridades públicas y las comunidades, y promover la convivencia al interior de las comunidades incluyendo a las víctimas, a los ex integrantes de organizaciones paramilitares, a integrantes de las FARC-EP en proceso de reincorporación a la vida civil”

⁸⁰ “con el fin de que acompañen de manera efectiva los procesos de restitución de tierras, retorno y reubicación de las personas en situación de desplazamiento y de las víctimas en el exterior, incluyendo refugiados y exiliados”

⁸¹ “El enfoque de género deberá ser entendido y aplicado de manera transversal en la implementación de la totalidad del Acuerdo”

⁸² “La adopción de un enfoque diferencial y de género, que tenga en cuenta los requerimientos en salud para las mujeres de acuerdo a su ciclo vital, incluyendo medidas en materia de salud sexual y reproductiva, atención psicosocial y medidas especiales para mujeres gestantes”

⁸³ “recibirá acompañamiento técnico y financiero para la reconstrucción de sus proyectos de vida y estrategias de generación de ingreso”

women's rights organisations, among others, are to receive legal and technical assistance in their work (p.43).

Related to victims' psychological needs, the national government commits to "improve the quality of psychosocial care for the emotional recovery of the victims according to the specific damage they have suffered, among these the particularly affected victims of sexual violence"⁸⁴ (p.181). Consequently, more local care centres for victims are to be established in order for the government to strengthen "the access to services of mental health for the victims who require so"⁸⁵ (ibid). In 2012, moreover, the Ministry of Health adopted a set of protocols aimed at establishing comprehensive health care for the victims of sexual violence. These protocols, however, fall short of incorporating guidelines matching the particular needs of victims of conflict-related sexual violence. Shortcomings with regard to the accessibility of these programmes are also present, as the majority of victims affected by these crimes are located in areas of conflict and, apart from that, tend to lack awareness of their rights to compensation and support. Implementation of these protocols therefore remains weak and many women resort to the help of women's organisations in order to receive the therapeutic help they need (ABColumbia, 2013).

Non-Compliance

Regarding the indicator 4.7 dedicated to providing sustainable assistance to women and girls living with or otherwise affected by HIV and AIDS in post-conflict situations, only a single reference can be found in the final peace agreement. This reference, furthermore, is directed at the female prison population and therefore does not incorporate all women affected by HIV/AIDS (p.118).

After having established to what extent the indicators as set out by the SC's eight Resolutions on WPS are present in the final peace agreement between the Santos government and the FARC, as well as some of the resulting DDR and TJ measures, the following section aims to discussing these finding critically. Moreover, the subsequent section follows the purpose of discussing more broadly the role of UNSCR 1325, in particular within the context of the latest Colombian peace process. Additionally, some

⁸⁴ "mejorar la calidad de la atención psico-social para la recuperación emocional de las víctimas de acuerdo al daño específico que hayan padecido, entre ellas las afectaciones particulares de las víctimas de violencia sexual"

⁸⁵ "el acceso y los servicios de salud mental para las víctimas que así lo requieran"

outlook is provided on the relevance of the Colombian approach to conflict resolution in the global context as well as on the main challenges that persist in the accord's successful implementation and the establishment of a durable peace.

5.5 Discussion: To what Extent does the Colombian Peace Process reflect the WPS Framework?

The Colombian peace process between the Santos government and the FARC reflects the UN's WPS framework both on a theoretical and practical level. With regard to the former, the UN's official discourses centred on the role of women in conflict and peace building are present in the Colombian case. With regard to the latter, applying the WPS indicators to the agreement and the TJ measures surrounding it, shows that the content and weighting of the framework's four pillars is reflected in the latest Colombian peace process. Consequently, all four WPS pillars are present in the final peace agreement between the Santos government and the FARC albeit with attention being skewed towards the pillars of 'participation' and 'relief and recovery'. Out of the four pillars, the smallest amount of attention has been dedicated to designing strategies of 'prevention' and measures of 'protection'. This goes hand in hand with the observation of a respondent to the civil society survey for the UN's Global Study on 1325 according to whom "the transformative potential of the WPS agenda has not been fulfilled, and this has to do as well with far too little focus on prevention and long-term structural change in societies" (UN Global Study, 2015, p.213).

With respect to Pillar I, directed at enhancing women's participation in conflict and peace building processes, the UN's WPS framework is reflected in the Colombian case to the extent that it led to more women being actively involved in the official Havana peace talk delegations, the negotiations, and the drafting of the final agreement, as well as in the accord's implementation process. This enhanced female presence resulted in the establishment of a gender sub-commission, which then allowed for the adoption of a special gender focus to the final peace accord. Another similarity to be found between the Resolutions comprising the WPS framework and the Colombian final peace agreement is the vagueness of formulations. While 'participation of women' is identified as essential to the peace process and a successful post-conflict reconstruction of Colombia's society, a lack of a clear definition of 'participation of women in the Colombian context', poses a challenge for women's rights organisations

tasked with incorporating a gender perspective into the laws designed to implement the accord.⁸⁶

Pillar II of the WPS agenda is not as strongly represented in the Colombian case as Pillar I. This pillar deals with the issue of prevention by designing strategies to combat violence against women as well as by ensuring an inclusive DDR process, engaging in efforts to debunk myths fuelling sexual violence, and initiating measures to sensitise troops on this matter. These aspects are considered crucial to create a post-conflict society in which women can participate equally and safely. Nonetheless, as demonstrated by the previous analysis, this pillar faces noticeable shortcomings. While provisions for making the DDR process more gender sensitive form part of the agreement, the actual transitional zones in which FARC fighters are to disarm are, for instance, not gender segregated. Where the gender focus falls short, is that it equates 'gender' mainly with 'women' and thereby fails to acknowledge the relational nature of the concept.

Putting an explicit emphasis on protecting and strengthening women is what renders this agreement significant, but this aim cannot be achieved by excluding men. While not mentioned explicitly, men seem to be part of the problems women face, for instance in the form of domestic violence, but are rarely portrayed as an essential part of the solution. Consequently, there is a lack of focus with regard to how different masculinities are constructed and a greater emphasis could be put on the topic of prevention if the underlying attitudes of a society as macho as the Colombian one are to be approached effectively. Gender and the militarisation of society cannot be discussed in isolation from each other and light needs to be shed on these constructions as underlying causes fuelling conflict and violence. In relation to that, failing to engage in activities to sensitise the state's own armed forces, as well as the demobilising fighters of paramilitary groups in particular, to the issue of conflict-related sexual violence, can be considered one of the main spoilers for potential conflict resolution and reconciliation.

Pillar III, aimed at ensuring the protection of women's rights and bodies, experiences similar shortcomings to Pillar II. Whereas commitments to this goal are found throughout the accord, the Colombian state has mainly paid lip service so far to

⁸⁶ From an interview with a representative of *Ruta Pacifica*, 24.3.17

their fulfilment. While a number of laws exist to protect women from dangers such as conflict-related sexual violence or femicide, their implementation remains flawed. The result is an environment characterised by impunity and on-going violations of women's rights and bodies. Consequently, the failure to include commitments to conduct a profound SSR into the final peace agreement leaves one of the core WPS indicators unfulfilled. The persistence of paramilitary structures, moreover, is detrimental to any efforts of leaving conflict in Colombia behind for good as it hampers the implementation of any law designed to protect women's bodies and rights. It is therefore up to the Colombian state to break up this nexus of paramilitarism in order for the measures set out in the peace agreement to bear fruit. Whereas some level of acknowledgement of the problem of paramilitarism can be observed, Pillar III's presence in its entirety in the Colombian case remains weak. The WPS agenda's presence, however, increases again with regard to the final pillar.

The strong presence of Pillar IV in the final peace agreement, covering matters of relief and recovery, can certainly be explained by the high involvement of women's rights advocates and victims' representatives in the process of drafting the agreement. Most importantly to note here are the exclusion of crimes of conflict-related sexual violence from amnesty provisions as well as the exceptional way in which the victims of the conflict have had the opportunity to take part in the negotiations and drafting of the agreement. This goes hand in hand with earlier efforts made by the Colombian state to compensate the victims of the conflict and will prove essential in making the envisioned peace sustainable. The overall development to be noted with regard to all four pillars, is that the involvement of women in the official stages of the peace process has increased steadily over time. Whereas continuously active in the background, Colombian women's rights organisations, due to the insistence of the UN in Colombia, have managed to increase their participation also with respect to the formal side to the negotiations. While the initial agreement to end the conflict between the Santos government and the FARC of August 2012 did not mention women at all, the final accord can be considered significantly more inclusive.

Language-wise, it is interesting to note that the demands raised by women's rights organisations to incorporate the female versions of specific words into the accord's formulations, were included. Consequently, the document speaks of

promotores/as of peace or *campesinos/as*. The category ‘women’, moreover, within the accord, encompasses a variety of women and a distinction is being made between rural women, Afro-Colombian women, elderly women, and indigenous women, with the particular vulnerability of these groups being pointed out on numerous occasions. Language bears power and one example for this is the fact that when comparing both versions of the peace accord, two important formulations were changed following pressure exerted by the NO-camp: the expressions ‘gender’, ‘sexual orientation’ and ‘diverse gender identity’ were replaced by the term ‘belonging to groups in condition of vulnerability’. ‘Gender equality’, moreover, was replaced by ‘equality of opportunities between men and women’ (Sanchez A., 2016).

One of the biggest drawbacks of the agreement, nonetheless, is the vagueness of its provisions. Whereas peace agreements unavoidably constitute a compromise between the warring parties, the lack of clear definitions of what the proposed actions and measures in order to protect women or to encourage their political and economic participation are supposed to entail, leaves many aspects open to interpretation. Nevertheless, the peace agreement is not to be treated in isolation from other developments either. Peace processes in Colombia are manifold due to the diversity of actors involved in the conflict. Consequently, certain laws have been passed to address problems covered by the WPS indicators already prior to the signing of the final peace accord. Therefore, a lack of provisions in the agreement with regard to the UN’s indicators does not necessarily mean that the respective issue has been neglected entirely.

Relating these findings to the theoretical background of this thesis, it can be noted that out of the three main discourses circulating at the UN on why and how women should take part in peace processes and conflict resolution, namely the main ‘rights based’ discourse, as well as the two supplementary ‘special treatment rights’, and ‘contributor rights’ discourses, all three form part of the Colombian final peace accord. Hence, references to the participation of women in the Colombian case are both ‘rights-based’ and ‘contributor based’, but without further clarifying what exactly renders their contributions valuable. The approach found in the Colombian final peace agreement is formulated in accordance with the ‘special treatment rights’ discourse present at UN levels, according to which a special emphasis on women and girls is

required, as the conflict affects them in a different manner owing to their perceived particular vulnerability. The inherent tension of the WPS framework between the pillars of ‘protection’ and ‘participation’ equally forms part of the final Colombian peace accord. On the one hand, women are characterised as belonging to the most vulnerable segments of the population and as victims of sexual violence in need of protection, entitled to compensations and justice as covered under Pillar IV. On the other hand, they are depicted as indispensable contributors to the strife for a lasting peace and full democracy as envisioned in Pillar I. While being a victim of sexual violence and acting as an agent for change are not mutually exclusive, the lack of clarity on this issue might send contradictory signals to law makers.

After discussing how the Colombian peace process between the Santos government and the FARC reflects the UN’s WPS agenda, it needs to be clarified to what extent this compliance can be explained by Colombian women’s rights organisations making active use of UNSCR 1325 or whether the attention dedicated to women’s rights in the current Colombian peace process can be explained by other factors. When asked about the role and importance of UN Women in Colombia during the interviews I conducted, consensus among the different organisations prevailed on how the contributions and support from UN Women Colombia proved to be paramount to ensure women’s participation in the official peace negotiations in Havana.

Answers to the questions as to the extent UNSCR 1325 constituted a helpful tool in pushing for their demands, however, opinions expressed by the interviewees differed. Not surprisingly, the representative of UN Women Colombia pointed out that UNSCR 1325 constitutes an important normative point of orientation. She described it as a tool widely used by different women’s rights organisations to hold the government accountable with regard to its commitments under said Resolution as well as in order to make their demands heard.⁸⁷ Others were less optimistic about the impact of UNSCR 1325 on Colombian law makers stating that members of Congress “would laugh to our faces” at the attempt of exercising pressure on them by referring to the Resolution. In this regard it turned out to be more helpful to gain the Congress members’ attention by means of framing women as potential voters in the next elections thereby promoting women more as a resource than putting attention on their rights of participation as

⁸⁷ From an interview with a representative of UN Women Colombia, 28.3.17

such.⁸⁸ The conclusions drawn by the representative of *Ruta Pacífica* are somewhere in between describing 1325 as “a tool out of many without much power”. She notes, moreover, that there is no consensus among women’s organisations in Colombia as to how useful a tool the Resolution actually is. Whereas some make ample use of it in their daily efforts, others do not consider it particularly useful. She concludes that the current success in actively involving women’s rights organisations in the peace process is a result of their years of hard work. While the UN is considered an indispensable ally in these efforts, “we achieved so much more than 1325 envisioned”.⁸⁹

Overall, the UN has had a stable presence on the ground in Colombia for the past thirty years. During the peace process it has been indispensable as a mediator between the government and civil society as well as a facilitator of discussions and continues to offer ample technical and financial support.⁹⁰ Moreover, UN Women Colombia, together with the Catholic Church, was responsible for enabling the journey of the delegation of victims to Havana. Therefore it can be summarised that external pressure as exercised by the UN on the negotiating parties accounts for a great deal of both women’s participation in the peace talks as well as the numerous references to their rights in the final peace agreement. From an international perspective in particular, the final peace accord has already been lauded as a success and a potential role model for other conflicts (Bell, 2016; Wucherpfennig, 2016; Maldonado, 2017). However, it needs to be taken into account that “given that research suggests that nearly half of agreements break down within five years, and more within a ten-year period, while many of the remainder enter a ‘no war, no peace’ limbo” (Bell, 2006, p.375).

⁸⁸ From an interview with a lawyer working at Women’s Link Worldwide, 30.3.17

⁸⁹ From an interview with a representative of *Ruta Pacífica*, 24.3.17

⁹⁰ From an interview with a representative of UN Women Colombia, 28.3.17



Figure 5. A mural in Bogotá, which has a vibrant street art scene. This piece located close to the city centre addresses the issue of forced displacement of Colombia’s rural (indigenous) population; the inscription reads as “we are memory”; source: author.

Colombia, nonetheless, could be regarded as having established the practice of a “slow drip process” (Bell, 2016, pp.166-7) which could turn out historically significant both within the country as well as abroad “as a contribution to a wider global peace-making practice where peace processes with particular armed groups, characterized at best as partial successes, can over time add up through gradual persistence and many stops, starts, phases, and mutations, to something approaching a comprehensive national political settlement” (ibid). Whereas viewed by some as an approach which might “dampen some conflicts and exacerbate others, their flaws can now also perhaps be understood to always inform the next stage of the process with regard to what a fuller peace would require” (ibid). This, however, constitutes a positive interpretation of the current process in which the upcoming hurdles are numerous and tricky; one of them being the upcoming 2018 presidential elections which will constitute a “key moment” in the process of the accord’s implementation phase also, given how divided the society in Colombia continues to be over the accord.⁹¹

Other factors which could have an impact on the durability of an eventual peace in Colombia are the unstable political and economic situation in neighbouring

⁹¹ From interviews with *Ruta Pacifica*, 24.3.17, UN Women Colombia, 28.3.17, Women’s Link Worldwide, 30.3.17, ODHACO, 7.4.17

Venezuela; a country Colombia has entertained a strained relationship with. The emergence of new criminal groups in major Colombian cities like Bogotá, Medellín, and Cali constitutes an additional problem (Redacción Política, 2017). Safety outside the big cities, however, is deteriorating in a similar manner with opposition, political and social movement leaders, and human rights advocates continuing to be threatened, attacked, and assassinated.⁹²

⁹² From an interview with a representative from ODHACO, 7.4.17

6. Conclusion

Women's participation in peace building processes has largely been neglected historically and from a scholarly perspective. In order to acknowledge the role women play in conflicts and conflict resolution, the UNSC has passed a set of eight Resolutions since the year 2000, with UNSCR 1325 being the founding document of what has become known as the UN's agenda on Women, Peace and Security. Hence, in order to draw attention to the issue that conflicts affect women in a different way to men, and to lay the foundation for increasing their official participation in peace building initiatives, the UN has made it their aim to encourage and facilitate the meaningful inclusion of women in peace negotiations and peace agreement implementation processes. However, the WPS framework has also been criticised on grounds of its ineffectiveness or potentially counterproductive effects on women in conflict. Until the latest peace talks between the Santos government and the FARC which were taking place in Havana from 2012 until 2016, previous Colombian peace processes did not differ from other peace talks with regard to excluding women, despite the high numbers of female guerrilla fighters, and the high share of female victims, especially in relation to crimes of conflict-related sexual violence and internal displacement. Taking into account more recent developments in international law, such as the establishment of the ICC under the Rome Statute as well as the aforementioned UN-led efforts to strengthen women's position in peace talks and implementation phases, this thesis sought to shed light on the question as to what extent the UN's WPS framework is reflected in the current Colombian peace process.

This serves the purpose of contributing to the growing body of literature on women and conflict. Moreover, it also deepens our understanding of the WPS framework's effectiveness by investigating how far its provisions are found to manifest themselves in the contemporary peace building environment, using the current Colombian peace process as a case study. Subsequently, a set of indicators was directly derived from the eight Resolutions comprising the WPS framework in order to measure the final peace agreement's compliance with the framework. Additionally, some of the TJ and DDR measures forming part of the current peace process have also been taken into account to complement the analysis. The timing of this research can be considered both an asset and a limitation. While it is highly up-to-date, the Colombian peace

process is only in its initial stage of implementation. This renders the assessment of the actual implications of the peace accord problematic to the extent that the findings are to be treated as preliminary results.

The findings of this thesis suggest that, with respect to the current Colombian peace process, compliance with the WPS framework is to be observed both related to the framework's aims and its shortcomings. Results show that the weighting of the four pillars inherent to the framework, namely 'participation', 'prevention', 'protection', and 'relief and recovery', is skewed towards Pillars I and IV. Increased attention therefore could be dedicated to matters of prevention and protection as envisioned by Pillars II and III. Apart from that, women's participation is justified based on all three official discourses on women and peacebuilding circulating at the official UN level. With regard to the title of this thesis, namely whether the end of the conflict can be described as a window of opportunity for women in Colombia to enhance their rights, results are mixed. Up to this point, it is adequate to say that the latest Colombian peace process with the FARC has been relatively successful with respect to including women regardless of the challenges inherent to the implementation phase. This strong level of inclusiveness and the fact that the Colombian government and the FARC actively involved civil society organisations such as women's and victims' rights representatives is exemplary. Current developments, however, show that violence against women, especially toward female civil society activists, is increasing. This is not uncommon in post-conflict societies which are characterised by a tension between the wish to return to a state of stability associated with pre-conflict times and the desire of women to interlock the progress they accomplished during the conflict and the peace negotiations.

Colombia finds itself at a critical moment and several threats to the successful implementation of the final peace accord persist. As retired Major General Patrick Cammaert (2008), who served as UN Force Commander of the Eastern Division in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, states, "It has probably become more dangerous to be a woman than a soldier in armed conflict". While substantial flaws to the implementation of the measures designed to protect women's rights and bodies continue to persist in Colombia, the country's current peace process and the final peace agreement it has produced can be considered successful in increasing women's participation in conflict resolution efforts and a step in the direction of strengthening

women's standing both in the political landscape of Colombia and with regard to future peace negotiations worldwide.

7. Appendix.

Appendix 1. Interview Questions (original version)

1. El conflicto armado y el papel de la mujer y de la ONU

1.1 ¿Qué tan involucradas están las mujeres en el proceso de paz colombiano y cómo se expresa su participación?

1.2 ¿Qué papel juega la ONU en el proceso de paz?

1.3 ¿En qué medida constituye la Resolución 1325 de la ONU una herramienta por las organizaciones de mujeres para ejercer presión sobre el gobierno colombiano para que incluya a las mujeres en el proceso de paz?

2. Desmovilización, desarme y reintegración

2.1 ¿En qué medida están las medidas de desmovilización, desarme y reintegración separadas por género y adaptadas a las necesidades diferentes de las mujeres y de los hombres?

2.2 ¿Cuáles son los mayores retos con respecto a la reintegración de ex-guerrilleras?

3. Justicia transitoria

3.1 ¿Cuáles son las medidas de justicia transitoria más importantes desde una perspectiva feminista?

3.2 ¿Se hace justicia a las víctimas de la violencia sexual relacionada con el conflicto?

4. Perspectivas de paz

4.1 ¿Cuáles son las perspectivas de paz con el nuevo acuerdo depaz y qué papel desempeñan las elecciones de 2018?

4.2 ¿Cuál es la actitud de la población respecto al acuerdo final de paz?

4.3 ¿Cuál podría ser el significado del proceso de paz colombiano y el acuerdo final de paz por otros conflictos? ¿Podría ser un modelo a seguir (con respecto a la inclusión de las mujeres)?

4.4 ¿Qué desafíos persisten?

Appendix 2. Interview questions (translated version)

1. The armed conflict and the role of women and the UN

1.1 How involved are women in the Colombian peace process and what does their participation look like?

1.2 What role does the UN play in the peace process?

1.3 To what extent does UN Resolution 1325 constitute a tool for women's rights organisations to exercise pressure on the Colombian government to include women in the peace process?

2. Demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration

2.1 To what extent are the measures of demobilisation, disarmament, and reintegration gender separated and adapted to the different needs of men and women?

2.2 What are the main challenges with respect to the reintegration of female ex-guerrilla fighters?

3. Transitional Justice

3.1 What are the transitional justice measures which can be considered most important from a feminist perspective?

3.2 Are the victims of sexual violence related to the conflict done justice?

4. Perspectives for peace

4.1 What are the perspectives for peace with the new peace agreement and what role do the 2018 elections play?

4.2 What is the attitude of the population towards the final peace accord?

4.3 What could be the significance of the Colombian peace process and the final peace accord for other conflicts? Could it be a role model (with respect to the inclusion of women)?

4.4 What challenges persist?

Appendix 3. Overview of the eight UNSC Resolutions of the WPS Framework.

<p>UNSCR 1325 2000</p> <p>"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"</p>	<p>UNSCR 1820 2008</p> <p>"Notes that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide, stresses the need for the exclusion of sexual violence crimes from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes . . . and stresses the importance of ending impunity for such acts as part of a comprehensive approach to seeking sustainable peace, justice, truth, and national reconciliation"</p>	<p>UNSCR 1888 2009</p> <p>"Reiterates its demand for the complete cessation by all parties to armed conflict of all acts of sexual violence with immediate effect . . . including measures such as, inter alia, enforcing appropriate military disciplinary measures and upholding the principle of command responsibility, training troops on the categorical prohibition of all forms of sexual violence against civilians, debunking myths that fuel sexual violence and vetting candidates for national armies and security forces"</p>
<p>UNSCR 1889 2009</p> <p>"Urges Member States, international and regional organisations to take further measures to improve women's participation during all stages of peace processes, particularly in conflict resolution, post-conflict planning and peacebuilding"</p>	<p>UNSCR 1960 2010</p> <p>"Encourages the Secretary-General to include in his annual reports submitted pursuant to resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) detailed information on parties to armed conflict that are credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape or other forms of sexual violence"</p>	<p>UNSCR 2106 2013</p> <p>"Recognizes the need for more systematic monitoring of and attention to sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations . . . in this regard, expresses its intent to employ, as appropriate, all means at its disposal to ensure women's participation in all aspects of mediation, post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding and to address sexual violence in conflict"</p>

Appedix 3 (continued)

UNSCR 2122

2013

"Recognizes the need for consistent implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in its own work and intends to focus more attention on women's leadership and participation in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, including by monitoring progress in implementation, and addressing challenges linked to the lack and quality of information and analysis on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peacebuilding and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution"

UNSCR 2242

2015

"Urges Member States, in light of the High-level Review, to assess strategies and resourcing in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda, reiterates its call for Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, and resolution of conflict, encourages those supporting peace processes to facilitate women's meaningful inclusion in negotiating parties' delegations to peace talks"

Appedix 4. Information on Interview Partners.

Casa de la Mujer is a human rights organisation, founded in 1982. With a focus on social justice oriented peacebuilding, it seeks to contribute to the defence and promotion of the human rights of women from a feminist perspective, strengthening of the rule of law, and democratic and inclusive peacebuilding in Colombia. Moreover, the organisation provides training, psychosocial assistance, legal aid and political advocacy services with the purpose of strengthening the women's movement in Colombia as well as the victims' movement in 20 departments around the country. My main task during the internship was to conduct research in order to contribute to the future proposals the organisation was going to make to the Colombian government with regard to implementing the accord's gender focus correctly.

Ruta Pacífica is Colombia's largest and internationally best known organisation fighting for women's rights. While its headquarters are located in Bogotá, *Ruta Pacífica* is an alliance of over 300 women's organisations throughout eight regions of Colombia, including the *Casa de la Mujer*. They describe themselves as "a feminist political project, national in character, working for a negotiated end to armed conflict in Colombia and to render visible the effects of war in the lives of women" (as cited in Cockburn, 2007, p.19).

UN Women was created in 2010 by the UN General Assembly to accelerate the organisation's goal on gender equality by combining the resources of previously distinctly working UN bodies in the context of an overall UN reform agenda. The main roles of UN women include facilitating the work of inter-governmental bodies of formulating policies and global standards, supporting member states both technically and financially in their implementation efforts of these standards, forging ties with civil society as well as regularly monitoring accountability and progress of the UN's efforts of promoting gender equality. UN Women has regional offices and my interview partner therefore was a representative of UN Women Colombia.

Women's Link Worldwide is a Spanish-Colombian organisation mainly composed of lawyers which focuses on advancing women's rights, such as reproductive rights, and which seeks to support women facing multiple inequalities in particular. It was founded in 2001 and strives to bring a gender perspective to human rights law thereby bringing attention to women's rights violations which are undocumented. The

organisation is of an international orientation, with regional offices in Latin America and Europe, and expanding partnerships across East Africa.

OIDHACO is a network of European and international organisations dedicated at advancing the rule of law, democracy, the respect for human rights, and sustainable peace and development in Colombia. The main cooperation partners of OIDHACO thereby are the United Nations, the European Union, Sweden and Norway in their strife for a political settlement of the Colombian armed conflict.

This field trip benefited from financial support provided by the Archimedes Foundation and the European Regional Fund.

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