



WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY IN THE MILITARY

NEWS ROUND UP—FEBRUARY 2024

The WPS in the Military News Round Up is an initiative from the Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI), the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center-designated Office of Primary Responsibility for WPS implementation. It provides the U.S. Army WPS community of interest with a monthly round up of military related WPS articles to increase knowledge of WPS and raise awareness of WPS efforts and initiatives. The articles in the WPS News Round Up are provided for your situational awareness, only. The contents do not reflect the official views of, nor are they endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army, CAC, or PKSOI.

Women, Peace, and Security in the Military News Round Up—February 2024

ARTICLE: Senators Seek Mental Health Support For New Military Moms

REPORTER: *By Svetlana Shkolnikova, Stars & Stripes (01.24.24)*

EXCERPT: Pregnant service members and new mothers in the military who are struggling with mental health issues could see additional support under a new Senate bill.

The legislation spearheaded by Sen. Jeanne Shaheen, D-N.H., and co-sponsored by Sen. Deb Fischer, R-Neb., aims to launch a pilot program within the Defense Department that would establish perinatal mental health prevention programs at military treatment facilities throughout the country.

“All too often, the mental health needs of new moms fall to the wayside as they adapt to life with a newborn — and this rings especially true for the brave women serving in our military,” Shaheen said.

READ MORE: <https://www.stripes.com/theaters/us/2024-01-24/military-mothers-mental-health-senate-legislation-12782059.html>

ARTICLE: DAF Hosts 2024 Women in Peace, Diplomacy Panel

REPORTER: *By Secretary of the Air Force Public Affairs (01.22.2024)*

EXCERPT: More than 150 attendees gathered for the 2024 Women in Peace and Diplomacy event hosted by the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs at the Pentagon, Jan. 10. In opening remarks, Assistant Deputy Under Secretary of the Air Force for International Affairs Maj. Gen. Julian Cheater expressed gratitude to the esteemed panelists as he highlighted the important contributions of women in diplomacy and foreign policy.

“We are truly honored to have ambassadors to the United States and their representatives from several partner nations on the stage to share their regional perspectives, thoughts on gender considerations in foreign policy, and personal and professional journeys as they reached the highest levels of diplomatic leadership,” Cheater said.

READ MORE: <https://www.spaceforce.mil/News/Article-Display/Article/3643711/daf-hosts-2024-women-in-peace-diplomacy-panel/>

ARTICLE: Conflicts to Watch in 2024: Implications for Women, Peace and Security

REPORTER: *By Jessica Anania, Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security blog (01.22.24)*

EXCERPT: In 2024, global security is poised to deteriorate even further amidst worsening conflict, instability, and violence. Recent data shows that approximately 600 million women—15 percent of women in the world—lived within 50 kilometers of armed conflict in 2022, more than double the levels

in the 1990s. Women are crucial to addressing these challenges: peace processes that involve women are more resilient, gender-equal societies are less likely to experience conflict, and women leaders advance vital peacebuilding work at the international, national, and grassroots levels.

READ MORE: <https://giwps.georgetown.edu/conflicts-to-watch-in-2024-implications-for-women-peace-and-security/>

ARTICLE: What You Should Know About the Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017

REPORTER: *By Our Secure Future (01.19.24)*

EXCERPT: In October 2017, the United States passed the Women, Peace, and Security Act, a piece of landmark legislation that recognizes women as powerful agents of change in peace and security operations. This legislation came into being thanks to the efforts of the US Civil Society Working Group and seeks to make the US a global leader in promoting women’s active engagement in conflict prevention, relief, and recovery. Originally published in 2018, this policy brief includes 2023 updates on the United States WPS Act and serves as a guide on the history, implementation, and funding of the act.

READ MORE: <https://oursecurefuture.org/our-secure-future/publication/what-you-should-know-about-women-peace-and-security-act-2017#>

ARTICLE: Women, Peace and Security in Africa: A Catalyst for Change

REPORTER: *By Sgt. Alisha Grezlik and Maj. Joe Legros, Army.mil (01.18.24)*

EXCERPT: Recent joint military efforts highlight Africa’s commitment to empowering females, and the pursuit of peace and security throughout Africa is not only a strategic U.S. objective, but one shared by numerous partner nations. U.S. Army Southern European Task Force, Africa (SETAF-AF) works with military leadership, and specifically women in leadership positions, throughout the continent of Africa to address conflict and instability. This is part of an ongoing peacebuilding effort under the umbrella of the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) initiative.

READ MORE:

https://www.army.mil/article/273044/women_peace_and_security_in_africa_a_catalyst_for_change

ARTICLE: Regional Gender Task Force for the Ukraine Refugee Response, 2023 Year in Review

REPORTER: *By UN Women (January 2024)*

EXCERPT: The Regional Gender Taskforce (RGTF) is a network of actors working to mainstream and integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in the Ukraine Refugee Response. This includes international organizations, UN agencies, and non-governmental organizations and civil society actors operating at the regional, national, and local levels. The ultimate aim is to ensure that all refugees from Ukraine and those affected by the crisis in neighboring countries can equitably and effectively access and use relief, services, and information.

READ MORE: <https://eca.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2024/01/regional-gender-task-force-for-the-ukraine-refugee-response-2023-year-in-review#view>

ARTICLE: Deep Dive Recap: The Balkans and the Gender Perspective

REPORTER: *By NATO (01.17.24)*

EXCERPT: On 17 January 2024, the NATO International Military Staff (IMS) Office of the Gender Advisor convened its fourth regional Deep Dive session, which discussed the Balkans and the Gender Perspective. It focused on the Balkan countries’ progress implementing the Women, Peace and Security

(WPS) agenda, as well as ongoing challenges. It also explored the significant advancements in regional WPS cooperation, and NATO KFOR mission's efforts to advance the gender perspective.

READ MORE: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/news_222406.htm

ARTICLE: 115 FW Special Emphasis Council Hosts Guest Speaker on Women, Peace, and Security

REPORTER: *By Master Sgt. Mary Greenwood & Tech. Sgt. Cameron Lewis, 115th Fighter Wing Public Affairs (01.16.24)*

EXCERPT: "Women Badgers Breaking Barriers is a special emphasis council inspired by organizations such as the Air Force's Women's Initiative Team and Women, Peace, and Security strategy," said Capt. Christen Bloomfield, the council leader and co-founder of Women Badgers Breaking Barriers and gender focal point for the state of Wisconsin. "Our purpose is to mentor, empower, address issues of the female force, provide professional development, and promote an organizational culture of diversity and inclusivity."

READ MORE: <https://www.ang.af.mil/Media/Article-Display/Article/3645444/115-fw-special-emphasis-council-hosts-guest-speaker-on-women-peace-and-security/>

ARTICLE: How Gender Diversity Improves Defense Operations

REPORTER: *By Doug Irving, RAND (01.09.24)*

EXCERPT: It's been U.S. policy since 2017, and not just as a moral imperative. The Department of Defense says meeting those objectives is key to building a more lethal force. For years, it has pointed for an example to the all-women teams that worked alongside special operations forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. They were able to build relationships in local communities that men never could, often yielding mission-critical intelligence.

READ MORE: <https://www.rand.org/pubs/articles/2024/how-gender-diversity-improves-defense-operations.html>

ARTICLE: China's Approach to the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Agenda: An Interview with Yeonju Jung

REPORTER: *By Clara Stähler and Tove Jalmerud, Institute for Security and Development Policy (January 2024)*

EXCERPT: In the current landscape of global politics, China's rise and its foreign policy are frequent topics of discussion. Simultaneously, there's a growing interest in studying gender and women's issues within the Chinese context. Surprisingly, the intersections of these two areas have been largely overlooked. To explore this knowledge gap, Clara Stähler and Tove Jalmerud, interns of the Asia Program and the Stockholm China Center at ISDP, sat down with Yeonju Jung, a PhD scholar researching this often overlooked juncture in international politics. They discuss various aspects of China's approach to the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda in the international arena.

READ MORE: <https://www.isdp.eu/publication/chinas-approach-to-the-women-peace-and-security-wps-agenda-an-interview-with-yeonju-jung/>

ARTICLE: This Afghan Female Fighter Fought With US Troops. Now, She's Readjusting to Life in the US.

REPORTER: *By Andrea Smardon, The World (01.17.24)*

EXCERPT: This woman, whose face was partially concealed with a head scarf, was an elite soldier working with the US Army's Special Forces. Raised in a country where women and girls risk being killed

just for going to school, she was a special operator who rappelled out of helicopters, carried an M4 carbine and actively fought to undermine the Taliban.

As the US withdrew the last of its military forces in August of 2021, this woman, and thousands like her, had no choice but to abandon their homes or risk prison or death for helping the Americans during the two-decade war.

READ MORE: <https://theworld.org/stories/2024-01-17/afghan-female-fighter-fought-us-troops-now-she-s-readjusting-life-us>

ARTICLE: Japan Military Seeks Women Soldiers as Birthrate Falls

REPORTER: *By Reuters (01.12. 2024)*

EXCERPT: On the Japanese navy ship Osumi, several female faces stand out among a crowd of elite soldiers. As Japan's population shrinks and tension in Asia rises... Japan's military hopes to see more women like them join its ranks-- even as recent high-profile abuse scandals may discourage them.

READ MORE: <https://news.yahoo.com/japan-military-seeks-women-soldiers-100925778.html>

ARTICLE: National Air and Space Museum Reveals Names of First Female Fighter Pilots to Fly Combat Missions

REPORTER: *By Brian McElhiney, Stars & Stripes (01.09.24)*

EXCERPT: On Nov. 15, 1994, Navy Lt. Kimberly "Face" Dyson quietly made history when she became the first female pilot to fly an official combat mission for the U.S. military. No one would know her name until nearly 30 years later.

The Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum revealed the names of the first five female military pilots to fly combat missions in an article written by museum curator Michael Hankins in the Dec. 21 issue of its magazine *Air & Space Quarterly*.

READ MORE: <https://www.stripes.com/branches/navy/2024-01-09/first-female-pilots-combat-missions-12611057.html>

ARTICLE: One Small Step: Women, Peace and Security in Space

REPORTER: *By Cassandra Steer, Elise Stephenson, and Sarah Furman, ANU National Security College (January 2024)*

EXCERPT: In this Policy Options Paper, Dr Cassandra Steer, Dr Elise Stephenson and Sarah Furman discuss the gendered implications of increasing attacks on space systems and why Australia's global reputation for gender-responsive approaches in arms control and other diplomatic efforts makes it best positioned to play a leading role on Women Peace and Security in space.

Australia depends on space-based technologies for both national security and civilian needs. Yet space systems are increasingly under threat due to interference and attacks aimed at undermining these critical capabilities. The gendered implications of attacks on space systems, and the need for greater participation of women in all levels of security and conflict decision-making, are gaining attention in multilateral United Nations (UN) fora such as the Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) on Reducing Space Threats, in which Australia continues to take an active part. At the same time, Australia's closest ally, the United States (US), and our Five-Eyes partner Canada have begun implementing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda into their defence-related space operations and workforce strategies and policies.

READ MORE: <https://crawford.anu.edu.au/publication/21842/one-small-step-women-peace-and-security-space>

Upcoming Events

WHAT: Women in the Military: Achievements and Challenges in the 21st Century

WHEN: Tuesday, February 13, 2024 @ 1200-1300 ET

WHERE: Hybrid: UPenn, Perry World House, 3803 Locust Walk Philadelphia, PA 19104 AND Online

READ MORE: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/women-in-the-military-achievements-and-challenges-in-the-21st-century-registration-814165640347?aff=oddttdtcreator>

“As the U.S. government navigates a changing national security landscape, women are likely to play increasingly important roles. Join Perry World House and the U.S. Army War College’s Eisenhower Series College Program as they discuss the progress and ongoing challenges regarding women serving in the Armed Forces. How does the US military compare to civilian corporations in giving women opportunity to fully participate and advance? Do the Armed Forces face unique challenges? What more should the Department of Defense do to increase the number of women in the ranks and ensure they have fair opportunities to advance into senior leadership roles?”

WHAT: Prioritising Women, Peace and Security: Gender Persecution as a Crime Against Humanity – A Geneva Security Debate

WHEN: February 13, 2024, @1230 CET – 1400 CET

WHERE: Geneva Center for Security Policy and Online

“The Al Hassan case represents the ICC’s first-ever prosecution of the crime against humanity of persecution on grounds of gender, found in Article 7(1)(g) of the ICC’s Rome Statute. The Office of the Prosecutor alleged that sexual and gender-based offences – including rape, sexual slavery, forced marriage and gender persecution – took place during the ten-month occupation of the Malian city of Timbuktu by two armed groups, Ansar Dine and Al-Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM) in 2012-2013. The ICC Trial Chamber is expected to render its verdict in the Al Hassan case in the coming months. If the defendant is found guilty, the judgment has the potential to be a watershed moment in the recognition of gender persecution during conflict, as well as the underlying discrimination that leads to such acts.”

READ MORE: <https://www.gcsp.ch/events/prioritising-women-peace-and-security-gender-persecution-crime-against-humanity-geneva>

WHAT: Joint WPS Academic Forum—WPS in PME Working Group (WPWG)

WHEN: Thursday, February 15, 2024 @1300 ET

WHERE: Online

Hosted by the Defense Security Cooperation University College of Strategic Security Cooperation. Guest Speaker will be Dr. Kerry Crawford, Associate Professor and Department Chair, Department of Political Science James Madison University, who will discuss how did the international community come to view conflict-related sexual violence as a weapon of war and the implications of that focus.

READ MORE: Contact PKSOI or the ArmyU WPS POC for more info.

WHAT: U.S. Army WPS Gender Advisory Network Meeting

WHEN: March 5, 2024 @1100 EDT

WHERE: MS Teams

The monthly meeting of the U.S. Army WPS Gender Advisory Network is scheduled for March 5, 2024. The purpose of the meeting is for U.S. Army Gender Advisors, Gender Focal Points, and the Army WPS

Community of Interest to discuss actions to enable comprehensive WPS implementation across the U.S. Army enterprise.

READ MORE: Contact PKSOI

WHAT: The Naval War College 10th Annual Women, Peace, and Security Conference

WHEN: May 2-3, 2024

WHERE: Newport, Rhode Island

This year's theme is "Advancing Gendered Security in a Complex World: Hard Power, Smart Power, Soft Power." The event brings together U.S. and international scholars and experts, civilian and military practitioners and leaders to better understand our complex and dynamic security environment. It examines women's full and equal participation, decision-making, and leadership, alongside men, in promoting lasting peace and security.

READ MORE: <https://usnwc.edu/News-and-Events/Events/US-Naval-War-College-2024-Women-Peace-and-Security-Symposium>

If you would like to be added or removed from the monthly WPS in the Military News Round Up distro list, please email: antonieta.rico.ctr@army.mil. Please forward the email to other members of the US Army WPS community who might find the contents valuable. To access last month's WPS Round Up, please see the archive here: <https://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/index.php/wps-news-round-up/>