



WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY IN THE MILITARY

NEWS ROUND UP—JANUARY 2025

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. 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—January 2025

ARTICLE: Interview with Special Envoy for Women Peace & Security

REPORTER: *By African Union (12.27.24)*

EXCERPT: On December 27, 2024, the African Union Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security highlighted the severe challenges faced by displaced African women and girls due to conflict, including violence and resource scarcity. Observing conditions in conflict-affected regions, she noted that many women resort to trading sex for food. With over 16 million internally displaced persons in Africa, urgent sustainable solutions are needed, as these issues affect regional stability.

READ MORE: [Interview with Special Envoy for Women Peace & Security | African Union](#)

PODCAST: What next for Syria's women?

REPORTER: *By Sally Sara, ABC listen app (12.22.24)*

EXCERPT: Syria's new de facto rulers, following the ousting of Bashar al-Assad, have appointed foreign and defense ministers to establish international relations. These appointees are senior members of the Hayat Tahrir al-Sham group, which played a key role in opposing Assad's regime. While the group aims to distance itself from its extremist past, there is internal pressure from Islamist hardliners to adopt a stricter, more conservative agenda, particularly regarding women's rights.

Listen: <https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/radionational-breakfast/what-next-for-syria-s-women/104757374>

ARTICLE: A Roadmap for Change: The Women, Peace, and Security Agenda

REPORTER: *By UN Women, Africa (12.20.24)*

EXCERPT: On December 20, 2024, the "A Roadmap for Change: The Women, Peace and Security Agenda" was addressed following a regional symposium in Nairobi. The event highlighted the crucial role of women's participation in peace processes in East and Southern Africa and called for breaking down barriers to their involvement. Emphasizing the need to amplify women's voices at the grassroots level, the symposium also underscored the importance of partnerships in advancing gender equality. It concluded with a commitment to prioritize women's leadership in peace and security efforts, recognizing that collective action is vital for achieving a more peaceful future.

READ MORE: <https://africa.unwomen.org/en/stories/news/2024/12/a-roadmap-for-change-the-women-peace-and-security-agenda>

ARTICLE: Canadian military deployed “gender advisors” to Ukraine, Haiti

REPORTER: *By Cosmin Dzsurdza, True North Wire (12.19.24)*

EXCERPT: The Canadian Armed Forces have deployed "gender advisors" to missions in Ukraine and Haiti to integrate gender-based analysis into military operations, as noted in the 2024 Departmental Report. This initiative, part of Canada’s third National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security, aims to promote diversity and inclusion. However, it has faced criticism from veterans who argue it distracts from military objectives during active conflicts and adds unnecessary bureaucracy. Critics question the relevance of prioritizing gender analysis in high-stakes environments.

READ MORE: <https://tnc.news/2024/12/19/canadian-military-deployed-gender-advisors-ukraine/>

ARTICLE: U.S. Naval War College Hosts 11th Women, Peace and Security Symposium

REPORTER: *By Lt. Cmdr. Peter Pagano, U.S. Navy News (12.18.24)*

EXCERPT: The U.S. Naval War College (NWC) hosted its 11th Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Symposium on December 16-17, 2024, focusing on the theme “Rethinking Global Security in a Complex World.” The event brought together over 1,300 participants, including military and government leaders from nearly 50 nations, to discuss the integration of gender perspectives in national and international security. Keynote speakers featured prominent figures such as Dr. Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu, President of Kosovo, and Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro, who highlighted the importance of women’s participation in enhancing combat readiness and operational effectiveness. NWC emphasized the critical role of the WPS agenda in promoting inclusive security and resilience. Insights from the symposium will inform NWC's new Perspectives on Modern War course and contribute to shaping future leadership strategies.

READ MORE: <https://www.navy.mil/Press-Office/News-Stories/Article/4009393/us-naval-war-college-hosts-11th-women-peace-and-security-symposium/>

STATEMENT: Joint Statement by the Security Council Signatories of the Statement of Shared Commitments for the Principles of Women, Peace and Security

REPORTER: *By United States Mission to the United Nations (12.18.24)*

EXCERPT: On December 12, 2024, Security Council signatories condemned the Taliban's systemic gender discrimination and human rights abuses against Afghan women and girls, including prohibitions on education and employment. They urged the immediate reversal of these discriminatory policies and emphasized the necessity of women's participation in Afghanistan's development. The statement called for unified action to uphold the human rights of all Afghans, reiterating that women's full engagement is crucial for the country's future.

READ MORE: <https://usun.usmission.gov/joint-statement-by-the-security-council-signatories-of-the-statement-of-shared-commitments-for-the-principles-of-women-peace-and-security-4/>

ARTICLE: Future missile frigate will be named after historic female Navy officer

REPORTER: *By Mark Faram/U.S. Navy, Stars and Stripes (12.17.24)*

EXCERPT: The future constellation-class guided missile frigate FFG 69 will be named USS Joy Bright Hancock, honoring one of the first female officers in the U.S. Navy. Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro announced the name at the 11th Women, Peace and Security Symposium. Joy Bright Hancock served as a yeoman during World War I and played a crucial role in the passage of the Women’s Armed Services Integration Act in 1948. She was one of the first women sworn into the regular Navy and helped expand opportunities for women in the service. The naming of the USS Joy Bright Hancock reflects the Navy's

commitment to increasing women's participation and fostering an inclusive culture, aligning with its efforts to build a next-generation, agile combat vessel capable of diverse operations.

READ MORE: <https://www.stripes.com/branches/navy/2024-12-17/uss-joy-bright-hancock-navy-frigate-16197188.html>

ARTICLE: Captain Liliana Ortiz Reyna

REPORTER: *By U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) (12.17.24)*

EXCERPT: Captain Liliana Ortiz Reyna, a trailblazer in the Armada de Colombia has achieved the remarkable milestones of being the first woman officer to serve as Second Commander of a Frigate and Commander of the Cadet Battalion at the Naval School of Officers "Almirante Padilla." Now, she breaks new ground as the first woman designated to command a frigate, having been assigned to lead ARC Independiente. This is a significant achievement in her illustrious career and a powerful inspiration for women in military service.

READ MORE: https://web.facebook.com/Southcom/photos/womenpeaceandsecuritycongratulations-to-captain-liliana-ortiz-reyna-the-first-wo/1032550495577330/?_rdc=1&_rdr#

READ MORE/ IN SPANISH: <https://escuelanaval.edu.co/capitan-de-fragata-liliana-ortiz-reyna>

ARTICLE: Making Peace Work for Everyone: Advancing Women, Peace, and Security in Cambodia

REPORTER: *By UN Women, Asia and the Pacific (12.17.24)*

EXCERPT: On November 18-19, 2024, UN Women Cambodia, in collaboration with the Ministry of Women's Affairs and supported by Canada, the UK, and Australia, hosted a workshop focused on advancing the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) agenda. The training aimed to enhance understanding of women's vital roles in peacebuilding among Cambodian government officials, civil society organizations, and gender advocates. Key discussions included addressing gender-based violence, climate security, and the participation of women in peacekeeping. The workshop is part of Cambodia's efforts to develop its first National Action Plan on WPS, emphasizing collaboration among various stakeholders to promote a more inclusive and equitable society.

READ MORE: <https://asiapacific.unwomen.org/en/stories/feature-story/2024/12/making-peace-work-for-everyone>

ARTICLE: OSCE trains Ukrainian rescuers to provide gender-responsive humanitarian response

REPORTER: *By Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (12.16.24)*

EXCERPT: From December 2 to 7, 2024, the OSCE held workshops in Lviv, Ukraine, to enhance women's leadership skills in humanitarian response for 54 participants from the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU). Focused on resilience-building and psycho-emotional support, the initiative aims to empower women leaders during the ongoing conflict. This effort is part of the OSCE's broader commitment to gender-responsive humanitarian action, having already trained 236 SESU representatives.

READ MORE: <https://www.osce.org/secretariat/582844>

ARTICLE: Women held as sex slaves in Sudan's South Kordofan, Human Rights Watch says

REPORTER: *By Reuters (12.16.24)*

EXCERPT: Human Rights Watch reported on December 16, 2024, that women and girls in Sudan's South Kordofan state have been subjected to repeated rapes and held as sex slaves by fighters from the Rapid Support Forces (RSF) and allied militias during ongoing conflict. Documented cases include assaults on

women as young as seven, with 79 instances of rape reported. Survivors described harrowing experiences of gang rape, prolonged captivity, and brutal treatment. The attacks are characterized as war crimes, particularly targeting women from the Nuba ethnic group. The war has caused significant devastation and displacement within the country.

READ MORE: <https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/women-held-sex-slaves-sudans-south-kordofan-human-rights-watch-says-2024-12-16/>

ARTICLE: Women, Peace and Security Bill [HL]

REPORTER: *By UK Parliament (12.13.24)*

EXCERPT: On December 13, 2024, the Women, Peace and Security Bill [HL] passed its third reading in the House of Lords with strong cross-party support. Moved by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger, the Bill aims to formalize the UK government's commitments under UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions addressing women's rights in conflict. The government expressed its support for the Bill's principles and emphasized its commitment to the Women, Peace, and Security agenda. The Bill has now been sent to the House of Commons for further consideration.

READ MORE: [https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2024-12-13/debates/C772F0F1-F825-4C32-8DBA-130BAB979E57/WomenPeaceAndSecurityBill\(HL\)](https://hansard.parliament.uk/Lords/2024-12-13/debates/C772F0F1-F825-4C32-8DBA-130BAB979E57/WomenPeaceAndSecurityBill(HL))

ARTICLE: Washington Guard engages with Thai and Malaysian partners

REPORTER: *By Sgt. 1st Class Nicolas A. Cloward, Joint Force Headquarters - Washington National Guard (12.12.24)*

EXCERPT: Washington Air and Army National Guard non-commissioned officers visited Thailand and Malaysia from December 1-5, 2024, emphasizing the importance of integrating women into combat roles in the Thai and Malaysian militaries. The delegation highlighted that women's participation, currently limited primarily to staff positions, could enhance military effectiveness and diversity. U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Allan Lawson noted that empowering women would make the forces "more lethal." U.S. Army Master Sgt. Magen Fossoth shared her experiences in integrating women into leadership roles and expressed hope that Thai and Malaysian forces would recognize the talents of their female service members to strengthen their militaries

READ MORE:

https://www.army.mil/article/281981/washington_guard_engages_with_thai_and_malaysian_partners

ARTICLE: Workshop on strengthening the WPS (Women Peace and Security)- Agenda in IGAD's Peace and Security work

REPORTER: *By IGAD Secretariat Avenue Georges (12.12.24)*

EXCERPT: From December 10 to 12, 2024, a three-day workshop was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, organized by the Peace and Security Division and the IGAD Gender Unit, in collaboration with the Folke Bernadotte Academy (FBA). The workshop aimed to strengthen the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda within IGAD's peace and security work, highlighting the importance of women's participation and constructive feedback in the implementation of WPS. Key topics included gender mainstreaming, roles of gender focal points, and WPS integration in mediation efforts.

READ MORE: <https://igad.int/workshop-on-strengthening-the-wps-women-peace-and-security-agenda-in-igads-peace-and-security-work/>

ARTICLE: Women in STEMM: A Journey of Authenticity and Empowerment

REPORTER: *By Andrew Kornacki, U.S Army (12.11.24)*

EXCERPT: The article highlights Kerry Redican's leadership journey in STEMM, emphasizing the importance of authenticity and female empowerment. Redican advocates for integrating women into leadership roles, citing their collaborative and vulnerable traits as essential for effectiveness. Through the Homeward Bound Leadership Program, which focuses on leadership development in Antarctica, she seeks to enhance teamwork and inclusivity. Redican stresses the need for mentorship and supportive networks to help women overcome challenges in STEMM, aiming to foster a future where more women lead and advocate for environmental sustainability.

RREAD MORE:

https://www.army.mil/article/281943/women_in_stemm_a_journey_of_authenticity_and_empowerment

ARTICLE: MSRON 1B and Djiboutian Servicewomen Complete Sea Sisters Training Event

REPORTER: *By Petty Officer 2nd Class Maurice Brown, U.S Army (12.10.24)*

EXCERPT: On November 9, 2024, servicewomen from Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron (MSRON) 1B and the Djibouti Coast Guard completed the "Sea Sisters" training event in Djibouti City. This three-day, women-led exercise included classroom learning and practical training in search and rescue, tactical combat casualty care, and water survival. Chief Gunner's Mate Lydia Cassard emphasized its role in strengthening U.S.-Djiboutian military relations and fostering collaboration. The Sea Sisters program, initiated in 2023, prepares participants for joint exercises, enhancing maritime security and building trust among nations.

RREAD MORE:

https://www.army.mil/article/281891/msron_1b_and_djiboutian_servicewomen_complete_sea_sisters_training_event

ARTICLE: HC Türk message to the 6th International Conference on Women, Peace and Security

REPORTER: *By United Nations Human Rights Council (12.10.24)*

EXCERPT: On December 10, 2024, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights addressed the 6th International Conference on Women, Peace, and Security, emphasizing the critical need for women's leadership in peace processes. He highlighted ongoing human rights violations against women in conflict, the rollback of gender equality, and the benefits of women's participation in peace agreements. The Commissioner called for accountability for gender-based violence, dismantling patriarchal power dynamics, and upholding human rights and humanitarian laws to foster meaningful change for women and girls worldwide.

READ MORE: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2024/12/hc-turk-message-6th-international-conference-women-peace-and>

ARTICLE: Austin recounts lessons in leadership at West Point address

REPORTER: *By Joseph Clark, DOD News (12.09.24)*

EXCERPT: In his December 4, 2024 address at West Point, Secretary of Defense Lloyd J. Austin III underscored the crucial role of women in the U.S. military, highlighting their bravery and contributions to combat operations. He recounted experiences where female soldiers demonstrated exceptional courage, emphasizing that they face the same dangers as their male counterparts but often do so without hesitation. Austin praised the competencies and accomplishments of women serving in the

military, noting that they are integral to the nation's military strength. He urged the next generation of officers to lead with conviction and to foster teamwork, ensuring that all service members, regardless of gender, feel supported and empowered in their roles.

READ MORE:

https://www.army.mil/article/281856/austin_recounts_lessons_in_leadership_at_west_point_address

STATEMENT: U.S. says it will support new Syrian leaders who protect women and renounce terrorism

REPORTER: *By Matthew Lee, Amer Madhani and Zeke Miller, Los Angeles Times (12.07.24)*

EXCERPT: On December 10, 2024, Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken announced U.S. recognition and support for a new Syrian government that renounces terrorism and protects the rights of women and minorities following the collapse of President Bashar Assad's regime. He emphasized the importance of an inclusive process for determining Syria's future and noted potential engagement with the rebel group Hayat Tahrir al Sham, despite its terrorist designation. The U.S. aims to prevent Syria from becoming a terrorist base while supporting humanitarian efforts and backing Israel's military actions in the region.

READ MORE: <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2024-12-10/us-says-it-will-support-new-syrian-leaders-who-protect-women-and-renounce-terrorism>

BRIEF: This Week in DPPA: 30 November - 6 December 2024

A brief roundup of United Nations-related political and peacebuilding events and developments globally.

REPORTER: *By Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, UN (12.07.24)*

EXCERPT: Key UN events included Under-Secretary-General Rosemary DiCarlo's emphasis on empowering women and girls in leadership roles amid rising global violence. Special Envoy Geir Pedersen reported significant changes in Syria's conflict dynamics, while the Peacebuilding Commission addressed challenges faced by internally displaced persons (IDPs). Training sessions in Iraq focused on advocacy against violence towards women and prison monitoring. In Colombia, peacebuilding initiatives were launched to enhance community engagement. Future briefings on Yemen and Haiti sanctions are scheduled.

READMORE: <https://dppa.un.org/en/week-dppa-30-november-6-december-2024>

RELATED: <https://dppa.un.org/en/mtg-sc-9797-usg-dicarlo-wps-3-dec-2024>

ARTICLE: Study sheds light on evolving views of gender integration within the U.S. military

REPORTER: *Heidi Hardt, UC Irvine, and Stéfanie von Hlatky, Queen's University (12.05.24)*

EXCERPT: A study by researchers from UC Irvine and Queen's University found that U.S. servicemembers in Afghanistan viewed gender integration positively, particularly in mixed-gender units, as female soldiers improved operational effectiveness by engaging with local women. Interviews and surveys with 43 active-duty personnel and veterans indicated that older soldiers were more supportive of integration, while 55% believed it had no impact on unit cohesion. The findings highlight changing attitudes toward gender integration in the military, driven by operational experience, but also caution that linking women's roles to effectiveness complicates equal opportunity efforts.

READ MORE: <https://news.uci.edu/2024/12/05/study-sheds-light-on-evolving-views-of-gender-integration-within-the-u-s-military/>

ARTICLE: Monthly Action Points (MAP) for the Security Council: December 2024

REPORTER: *By NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (12.02.24)*

EXCERPT: In December 2024, the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security's recommendations for the UN Security Council focus on Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and Israel/Palestine. They urge action to reverse Taliban policies restricting women's rights in Afghanistan, stop violence against civilians in the DRC while supporting women's roles in peace efforts, and demand a ceasefire and compliance with international law in Israel/Palestine to allow humanitarian access and protect women's rights. Overall, the emphasis is on protecting women's rights and ensuring their involvement in peace processes across these regions.

RREAD MORE: <https://www.womenpeacesecurity.org/map/map-december-2024/>

REMARKS: The Navy Must Retain More Women SWOs

REPORTER: *By Lieutenant Jasmine Arnold and Lieutenant Commander Kayla Lovelady, U.S. Navy, and Major Grace Chng, Republic of Singapore Navy, U.S. Naval Institute (12.24)*

EXCERPT: An article discusses the high departure rates of female Surface Warfare Officers (SWOs) in the U.S. Navy, who leave at greater rates than males due to family issues and dissatisfaction with military life. While female representation in the SWO community has increased, the retention gap remains. The authors call for targeted mentorship programs, improved family support, and better childcare options to address the unique challenges faced by female SWOs. They emphasize that enhancing retention is crucial for cultivating leadership talent and ensuring operational effectiveness within the Navy.

READ MORE: <https://www.usni.org/magazines/proceedings/2024/december/navy-must-retain-more-women-swos>

Upcoming Events

WHAT: CSW69 / Beijing+30 (2025)

WHEN: March 10- 21, 2025

WHERE: The sixty-ninth session of the [Commission on the Status of Women](#) will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

READ MORE: <https://www.unwomen.org/en/how-we-work/commission-on-the-status-of-women/csw69-2025>

If you would like to be added or removed from the monthly WPS in the Military News Round Up distro list, please email: mayada.a.shawkat.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/>