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*THE IMPACT OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE  
ON STABILITY AND SECURITY*

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MILITARY FELLOW  
RESEARCH REPORT

# THE IMPACT OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ON STABILITY AND SECURITY

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## ABSTRACT

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Gender based violence (GBV) is being used against women across the world. Intimidations, including murder, rape and acid thrown in the face are used as weapons of war. The status of women is an indicative barometer of the stability of a region. This study will examine GBV as a U.S. and global security issue. It seeks to enhance the understanding and awareness of GBV for operational planning and for dealing with circumstances where the Congolese, African Union, U.S. and its allies must confront violations of international law, including human rights abuses. As threats from terrorism continue to evolve regional instability in the DRC is a peril to both Africa and the world at large. The DRC is a mineral and oil rich country of which trade in the former have created a cycle of conflict resulting in an epidemic of GBV. This project will identify comprehensive strategies to address GBV in order to prepare local women in the DRC and globally as future peace builders. Investing in what is one of the world's greatest untapped resources, women, is critical not only to conflict resolution but to the progress needed for a 21<sup>st</sup> century Africa and world.

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## **THE IMPACT OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE ON STABILITY AND SECURITY**

*“How ironic it would be if women’s issues, so long ignored in security studies as simply irrelevant, became a central focus of security scholars in the twenty-first century”<sup>1</sup>*

The strategic environment of our world is ever changing. Our globally interconnected world has brought with it globally interconnected problems. One of these problems is gender based violence (GBV). The links between GBV and a nation’s security and stability are undeniable. High rates of such violence drain the state of both earnings and resources, and threatens stability and governance at all levels. It discourages investment, destroys social cohesion and limits employment and educational opportunities. GBV is an important barometer of state fragility as it points to the states inability to provide basic security, services or capacity to impose social controls on GBV behavior. This is particularly harmful to development efforts in low income and war torn countries.<sup>2</sup> We can ill afford to continue ignoring GBV in its various forms throughout the world. It is a public health issue and human rights issue affecting poverty, development and economic growth which are all critical to stable nations and a stable world.<sup>3</sup>

GBV for this paper is defined as ‘any harm or suffering that is perpetrated against a woman or girl, man or boy and that has a negative impact on the physical, sexual or psychological health, development or identity of the person’. The root cause of the violence is founded in gender-based inequalities and gender-based discrimination.<sup>4</sup> The term gender-based refers to the inferior or subordinate role of women in the construct of their respective societies rather than on a biological basis which defines a person’s sex.<sup>5</sup> Gender equality references the equal rights, responsibilities, obligations and opportunities of both genders. It considers access, participation and impact for

both genders in actions such as legislation, policies and programs at all levels.<sup>6</sup> GBV includes such acts as rape and sexual assault, child marriage, prostitution, female genital mutilation, dowry-related violence, trafficking, sexual gender based violence during armed conflict (SGBV), gendercide, 'honor' killings, forced sterilization and acid throwing. Any long-term solution to GBV is best addressed using cross cutting strategies at multiple levels with a coordinated and mutually reinforcing attack.<sup>7</sup> This can most effectively and affordably be done using a human security model consisting of two components, physical security and human development. It is time to scale back military dominance of U.S. policy, consider alternative options and place value on the full elements of our national power. A human security model specifically confronts deteriorating conditions and their causes that increasingly plague many unstable areas of the world. It is a people-centered approach to overall security that is individual-centered rather than state-centered. It both secures and develops the people at the individual level. A combination of human security and development are essential elements of increased national, regional and global security.

The intent of this paper is to promote a better understanding of GBV and its impact on US and global stability and security. It will examine the macro and micro root causes of GBV. By applying a human security model it will demonstrate the potential of gender inclusive human development to contribute to economically and socially stronger nations. This creates a platform for equity that promotes a sustained peace, reduced GBV and more stable and secure nations.

## The Impact of GBV on U.S. and Global Security

GBV not only causes a great damage on the victim's life but also creates a great burden to the stability and development of countries through high human, social and economic costs. All acts of GBV are unacceptable violations of human beings. Together they form a huge obstacle to human security and development which in turn have the potential to adversely impact global security. The following are three examples of GBV that illustrate the significance of GBV on stability and security at all levels of government and society. It is local, national and transnational crime at its worst and at the expense of women and children, healthy families, societies and prosperous nations.

*Human Trafficking.* Trafficking in persons (TIP) serves as the first illustration of targeted GBV impact. The Department of State (DOS) estimates that 80% of the transnational boarder trafficking are women and girls and 50% are minors.<sup>8</sup> TIP reports an estimated 700,000 persons are trafficked worldwide annually including 14,500 - 17,500 into the U.S.<sup>9</sup> The U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation lists the U.S. as one of the higher transient and destination points for trafficked persons, unregulated and untaxed.<sup>10</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics cite that 83% of the reported incidents in the U.S. involved allegations of sex trafficking.<sup>11</sup> The DOS 2010 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report indicates there are 12.3 million adults and children in forced labor, bonded labor and forced prostitution around the world.<sup>12</sup> Most trafficked persons are from poor countries, reducing labor and productivity while the potential for growth and development diminishes.



It is difficult to quantifiably measure the scope and costs of TIP due to the underground nature of the activity. Many of the consequences remain hidden, however it is clear the impacts are notable from the individual to the global level.<sup>13</sup>

Simply from an economic standpoint TIP costs the global community billions of dollars annually.<sup>14</sup> The International Labor Organization (ILO) assessed the economic activity of human trafficking in the world at 31.6 billion dollars. The IMF estimated the turnover of international organized crime at \$1.5 trillion.<sup>15</sup> TIP is third to arms and drugs as a source of illegal income.<sup>16</sup> TIP is often intermixed with activities of organized crime that includes money laundering, drug use, racketeering, extortion, fraud, document forgery and increasing border control costs.<sup>17</sup> Where organized crime flourishes, governments and the rule of law are undermined and weakened.<sup>18</sup> It is not surprising that TIP has become an increasing priority for governments throughout the world.<sup>19</sup>

The costs continue to escalate when considering the stress of GBV on the judicial, health and social systems as a result of TIP. Legal costs include requirements performed by the police, prosecution and defense services, courts, prison and probation services.<sup>20</sup> Public health costs include treatment for physical injuries, HIV/AIDS, STDs, abortions and reproductive and mental health trauma. Unlike many crimes that have a one-time impact the effects of TIP are manifested in the individual for years.<sup>21</sup> Psychological trauma will have significant effects on the individual's mental health and well being for an extended time if not a lifetime.<sup>22</sup> The social costs include a lack of education for those engaged in trafficking which further exacerbates a cycle of poverty, criminal behavior and stunts national development. It is evident that the interrelated

impacts resulting from the broad range of TIP related crimes has created a collective threat to global peace, security and stability.<sup>23</sup>

*Gendercide.* New insights into population control as related to state stability and security include an additional demographic, that of sex ratios. Scholars argue that the exaggerated gender inequality leads to an altered security calculus for states.

Gendercide contributes to the skewing of the sex ratio.<sup>24</sup> It is a result of coercive abortions, forced sterilization and gender selection that results from China's One Child Policy. The 1979 policy was enacted to stem rapid growth. China has a population growth challenge but there are more acceptable ways to control population growth than eliminating a particular gender. While China did not mandate population control by gender selection, the policy and the cultural preference for boys have resulted in this unplanned outcome. There is no other national policy affecting women's lives as significantly as this policy. The DOS's 2008 Human Rights Report on China lists the women's suicide rate at 500 per day, three times that of their male counterparts. Many observers believe that the birth limitation policy, preference for males, discrimination in education and employment and other societal factors contribute to this high rate.<sup>25</sup>

The policy has had unintended consequences including an excessive of over 30 million males of prime marrying and military age, social instability and human trafficking. Stanford University projects China to have 47.4 million "surplus-men" by 2050 if this policy is not changed. The crime rate has nearly doubled in China in the past 20 years.<sup>26</sup> A study connecting higher sex ratios and crime rates, to include prostitution, sexual assault and trafficking concluded that these were interrelated factors.<sup>27</sup> In 2007 riots erupted in a village when planned parenting officials gathered up men and women

in violation of the policy and conducted mass sterilization and forced abortions.<sup>28</sup>

China's Ministry of Public Security reports 90,000 "mass incidents" annually. Expanded social revolts have increased as noted in Congressional hearings citing mass incident increases to 120,000 in 2008.<sup>29</sup>

China's size and composition pose a security demographic that presents a potential regional and international threat. This threat is referred to as the 'bare branch bachelor army' also described as 'the world's largest lonely hearts club.' China will have little choice but to build up the troops in the armed forces to contain the surplus men.<sup>30</sup> Policy makers and planner alike are foresighted to consider that in another decade China will have 40 million excess male bare branches. The troops have a minimally risk adverse government that at some point may wish them to give their lives in pursuit of national interests.<sup>31</sup>

Two additional demographic trends emerging from this policy are an elderly population disproportionate to young adults and an imposed low fertility rate. This reduces future workers to support China's expanding economy creating its own unintended economic threat. The level of inflicted violence against pregnant women is a consequence of this policy and has extended harmful effects on the Chinese males, families and social structure. It has potential destabilizing and security implications nationally and globally.

*Rape and Sexual Assault in Armed Conflict.* Rape and sexual assault are deliberately and systematically used against women and girls as weapons of war. The UN Security Council unanimously describes rape as a tactic of war and a threat to international security. It specifically notes that "women and girls are particularly

targeted by the use of sexual gender based violence (SGBV), including as a tactic of war to humiliate, dominate, instill fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or ethnic group.” UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1820 strictly prohibits SGBV against civilians in armed conflict.”<sup>32</sup> The purposes of using rape as an instrument of war are numerous. They range from commanders allowing it as ‘soldier booty,’ as a systematic and deliberate attempt to terrorize and control the local population, or to emasculate the males perceived ability to protect his wife and family. The results are a damaged, torn, fractured society where the women suffer from physical and psychological trauma. It accentuates HIV/AIDS rates, fistulas, cultural social exclusion, ostracism and children born out of this violence.<sup>33</sup>

GBV takes place at three levels, the direct, structural and cultural level. The direct level assumes inflicting physical or psychological harm on an individual. The structural level includes systems, laws, institutions or policies which create exclusionary situations at the expense of others to include meeting basic needs. Violence inflicted as a result of traditions, religion or ideologies occurs at the cultural level.<sup>34</sup> It can and often does take place at all levels collectively as the three planes are often interrelated. At this point the affected people have lost their human security. They have become hostage to internal ‘conditions’ which create an environment where bad actors may appear and flourish. The conditions which must be addressed at the individual level to achieve human security are identified in a UN report as personal, community, economic, health, food, environmental and political threats.<sup>35</sup> They are principally a function of lack of order, poverty and inequity highlighted by a lack of access and participation in social, economic and political decision making. This requires a conditions-based response that

is best executed with a human security strategy. An analysis of these conditions is a starting point for understanding important human security issues, beginning with the physical safety of the population. An effective human security protocol is foremost about protection of civilians (POC). Identifying the actors, existing legal frameworks, mitigating strategies and recommendations is principle to securing and developing the human security model as addressed in the following discussion of GBV in the DRC.

### Background

*Country Review.* The DRC, formerly Zaire, is located in Central Africa. It is the third largest country in Africa, less than a fourth of the size of the US and has a population of 68 million. It is bordered by nine countries and has tremendous agricultural and hydropower potential. Its rich mineral wealth includes a plentiful supply of cobalt, copper, cadmium, industrial and gem-quality diamonds, gold, silver, zinc, manganese, tin, germanium, uranium, radium, bauxite, iron ore, and coal.<sup>36</sup> Despite the abundance of natural resources the DRC is among the poorest in the world according to the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The DRC gained its independence from Belgium in 1960 and quickly entered into a period of political and social unrest. The spillover from the Rwandan genocide in 1994 ignited a series of wars and conflicts that continue today. By 2008 over 200,000 women and girls had been raped, the death toll was over 5 million and millions more were displaced.<sup>37</sup> A recent report published in the American Journal for Public Health has greatly magnified the number of rapes in the DRC citing 1.69 to 1.80 million women raped in their lifetime. This number included 407,397- 433,785 raped in the past 12 months. Their conclusions noted that future policies and programs should focus on

eliminating the acceptance of and impunity surrounding sexual violence nationwide in the DRC while also maintaining and enhancing efforts to stop militias from perpetrating rape.<sup>38</sup>

*Armed Actors.* Armed forces from a variety of sources brutalize the people in an environment marred with civil strife. Rape and other gender based violent crimes continue to be described as the worst in the world. The perpetrators are UN peacekeepers, the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) which is the Congolese National Army, the police forces and various internal and neighboring country militia groups. Predominant militia groups are the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) made up of former Rwandan armed forces and Interhamwe militia, the National Congress for the Defense of the People (CNDP) whose claim was to fight the FDLR and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). The LRA is a brutalizing Ugandan rebel group that attacks the civilian population, particularly women and children.<sup>39</sup> The FARDC and police are unfortunately as guilty as the rebel groups with respect to committing SGBV against the population that it is charged to protect.

### The Impact of GBV in the DRC on U.S. and Global Security

The DRC is a failing state with high - level needs, weak governance and low capacity.<sup>40</sup> Its natural resource trade has created a cycle of conflict resulting in an epidemic of GBV. Beyond moral urgings for addressing GBV there are utilitarian arguments for engagement. These have to do with the protection of access to valuable natural resources and to regional instability due to food security and migration. As

threats from internal conditions continue to evolve the instability in the DRC and Great Lakes region is a peril to both Africa and the world at large.

First, as pointed out by the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Independent Review Panel regarding persistent problems from failed and failing states:

“the corrosive conditions common to failed states only add to the complexity of regional security situations, and thus complicate the burden of maintaining the integrity of the international system.”<sup>41</sup> These conditions include the profitable but ill managed natural resources in the DRC in both the mining industry and agricultural sector.

The rich deposits of coltan, cassiterite, timber, gold, and diamonds have created strong material incentives for competition in eastern DRC. The competition of scarce and valuable resources is a key factor in the lack of stability and continuation of war.”<sup>42</sup> The U.S. is the world’s largest consumer of coltan, which it uses to produce consumer electronic products and high-end electronics critical to defense weapons systems. The DRC possesses 80 percent of coltan reserves – guaranteeing a role for the DRC in the international mineral trade as consumption increases. This is worth considering when the U.S. begins to strategically evaluate where its vulnerabilities lie in procuring critical minerals for tomorrow’s defense technologies.<sup>43</sup> It benefits the U.S. to partner with the DRC in settling their conflict and gaining positive control of their natural resources. Such an alliance could assist the people in getting the profits of their resources and efforts, and grow the economy over all. Developing a relationship of this nature is in the strategic interest of the U.S. In the event of future scarce mineral market access such an ally could potentially enable the U.S. to obtain critical assets at a fair market value.

Secondly, 2010 was marred by persistent armed conflict that was linked to the resurgence and radicalization of various armed groups in the DRC. This has resulted in a food security and migration emergency that is clearly an identifiable factor of the conflict. Around 70 percent of the population is food insecure<sup>44</sup> Food availability, quality and the agricultural livelihoods have been seriously harmed by the armed conflicts. Chronic instability due to lack of enforcement of the rule of law and increased competition over natural resources fuels this crisis. Lack of human security with respect to protecting the women at home or while traveling and working in the fields contributes to this predicament. Women produce 80% of food crops for household consumption and 95% of rural women work in agriculture and dominate agricultural production in the DRC.<sup>45</sup> Resource centered migration has a destabilizing effect on the families, economy, cities and the region. The impact of meeting these urgent needs has required massive U.S. and international humanitarian operations.<sup>46</sup> The economic and social instability created by the loss of production and migration is unsettling to the DRC and region.

Third, the humanitarian situation in the DRC represents a serious crisis. SGBV continues to be used as a deliberate tactic of war. It is a crime of great magnitude and concentrated evil against women and girls that has garnered no effective state, regional or international intervention. Unfortunately for the people it is business as usual in the eastern DRC. The use of SGBV against the population represents a real impediment to peace. It is certainly a major impediment to establishing stability in the DRC and surrounding areas. An absence of political will at both the national and international level has left the population as casualties despite codified legal prohibitions.



*United Nations Resolutions.* The UN has been the lead player in the roles of women in armed conflict since the signing of the Geneva Convention and establishment of the UN Commission of Status of Women (CSW) 1946. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was signed in 1979.<sup>47</sup> The Declaration and Platform for Action (PFA) was developed at the Beijing Conference in 1995 empowering women by national and international governments by action through laws, policies, programs and development priorities.<sup>48</sup> Gender specific UN resolutions further include the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 (2000). This was a landmark document addressing international women's rights, peace and security issues, specifically the disproportionate and unique impact of war on women.<sup>49</sup> UNSCRs 1820 (2008), 1888 and 1889 (2009) address sexual violence as a threat to international peace and security, recognizing that the use of rape and sexual violence as a tactic of warfare is a matter of the same. The resolutions urge an increase in the participation of women in peace and security efforts. It requests women's protection advisers and units, and the retraining of security forces. All actors are urged to incorporate a gender perspective in peace and security efforts as well as post conflict economic and political decision making.<sup>50</sup>

A key UN document relevant to SGBV is the United Nations "Responsibility to Protect (R2P) (2005). R2P principles stipulate that states have an obligation to protect their citizens from mass atrocities, that the international community should assist them in doing so and that if the State in question fails to act appropriately, the responsibility to do so falls to the larger community of States.<sup>51</sup> The situation in Libya has put R2P front and center in diplomacy and security. It begs the question as to how far NATO's

intervention to protect civilians in Libya represents a deepening of the norm of responsibility to protect (R2P). On one hand there appears to be a progressive acceptance of R2P by the international community. On the other hand the abstentions of three emerging countries, China, Brazil and India (in addition to Germany and Russia) highlight the 10/5 split. They did not veto the vote but it does call in to question their willingness to bear the responsibility and cost of enforcing international law.<sup>52</sup> The current selective use of R2P may indeed have significant consequences for future use of this doctrine. Finally, a controversial UN Mapping Report released October 2010 focuses on the most serious incidents across the DRC from 1993 through 2003. Its findings noted that women and children were the main victims of much of the violence and provides recommendations for engaging this issue (see appendix A).<sup>53</sup>

*United States Legislation.* The U.S. has three pieces of supporting legislation. Public Law (PL) 109-456, DRC Relief, Security and Democracy Promotion Act states the President should appoint a Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region to help coordinate efforts to resolve the instability and insecurity in eastern Congo.<sup>54</sup> The Lords of Resistance Army (LRA) Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act contains a four point strategy to address the LRA rebel challenge.<sup>55</sup> The Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, Sec 1502 requires the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) registered manufacturers to exercise due diligence on the source and chain of custody on DRC originating minerals. The DOS is required to submit a strategy to address the illicit minerals trade in the regional and linkages between conflict minerals and armed groups that have resulted in extreme levels of violence, particularly SGBV (see appendix B).<sup>56</sup>

*DRC Legislation.* The DRC Constitution and Articles 14 and 15 effective February 16, 2006 hold the government responsible for eliminating all forms of discrimination against women. It directs full participation in development and institutions with guaranteed parity at all levels. It fights all forms of violence against women and makes SV a crime against humanity punishable under law.<sup>57</sup> The Comprehensive Strategy on Combating Sexual Violence in the DRC and the National Action Plan (NAP) (2009) are frameworks that strengthen, prevent, protect and respond to SGBV through specific actions (see appendix C).<sup>58</sup>

There is no lack of national or international resolutions and legislation. While well meaning intentions and political rhetoric abound for the most part there has been little real substantive progress. The DRC needs a champion to synchronize and direct a multi-sector, comprehensive solution to achieve stability and peace. The DRC has not demonstrated adequate interest, capacity or political will in addressing SGVB. Overall the international community has fulfilled its obligation to the women and girls with a triple-A syndrome of apathy, ad hoc practices and amnesia that is across international institutions and structures.<sup>59</sup> The little progress that has been made in the development of the DRC is the result of inadequately coordinated and resourced government and non-governmental entities. The UN alone has many cross cutting agencies within its organization that along with international level Departments of State, Justice, Defense, AID and agencies such as the World Bank have all made contributions. There are at least 4000 NGOs registered with the DRC Ministry of Planning and Finance Ministry<sup>60</sup> However, there is no one centralized authority to orchestrate a coherent plan that spans all of the contributing partners and bordering neighbors. For any progress to be made

substantial resources would have to be applied. It is clear that greater resourcing and a new strategy is needed.

The U.S. should appoint a full time Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region in accordance with PL109-456 to help coordinate efforts to resolve the instability and insecurity in Eastern Congo. The Envoy should synchronize a comprehensive human security plan as a local, ground up foreign policy intervention. Full inclusion of women *must* be a U.S. and international requisite in planning interventions. It makes no sense to exclude 50% of the population from human security and development planning. After all, women are often the ones who have to deal with the effect of family and community devastation after the fighting stops despite their exclusion from social, economic and political power. The Envoy should not have the illusion that he/she will solve the DRC's problems on their own nor should they so desire. Developing ownership, capacity building and sustainability at the local level is critical to increased security. All Congolese have a right to be involved in the planning as they will have to live with and manage the consequences. The goal is to develop the population at the individual level and strengthen legitimacy of local authorities while massaging an alignment with national authorities.<sup>61</sup> It is expected that the DRC simultaneously attend to its responsibility to protect and provide for its population. It is currently no more than a failed state that does what all failed states do, which is to “not” provide the basic services, infrastructure, and security for its people, territories or natural resources.

### Human Security through Protection Mechanisms

*Physical Security.* Foreign military power in and of itself is not going to resolve SGBV or bring long term peace and prosperity to the DRC. Nor is any country likely to

commit sufficient military resources to do so. The government must establish a monopoly over foreign and home grown violence. The nation's armed and police forces must operate in a legally, socially responsible manner.<sup>62</sup> They are particularly expected not to inflict violence on their own population. Simply put the DRC needs to reform its overall security sector in order to establish a foundation for human security and human development. This requires a focus on its internal national defense forces, law enforcement agencies and judicial legal system. The US and international community should apply pressure in encouraging and supporting the DRC to: (1) train, pay and professionalize a gender integrated armed and police force, (2) stop impunity for violators of the rules of law (3) manage their mining industry which fuels SGBV, conflict and corruption and (4) establish a judicial infrastructure with institutional frameworks and organizations that interpret and enforce the rule of law in order to protect the population and settle matters of conflict.<sup>63</sup>

First, the defense and law enforcement organizations must be professionalized. The government must *vet*, train, inculcate values, equip and *pay* the national armed forces and police forces and take care of their Families.<sup>64</sup> A correct place to initiate this reform and address the serious SGBV issue is by improving gender integration in both the military and police forces. This may require a transitional quota system to reach a critical mass of females in the organization in order to overcome cultural or institutional based gender discrimination. The army consists of 2.59% females and the police force 5.11% female. The cultural view of both of these professions as man's work does not entice young females to enlist.<sup>65</sup> A recruitment campaign and role modeling platform can ease this issue. Gender awareness must be integrated into training for all

uniformed personnel. This is to educate and sensitize them to the civilian female population that they are obligated to protect. Training is also necessary to ensure that their female counterparts are protected, fairly advanced and receive the professional dignity and respect due all uniformed professionals. Leadership must be held accountable. It will be hard for a war torn community to accept gender equality if the law enforcement organizations themselves do not reflect it.

There are multiple mission-related values to incorporating females into the two professions. Experience and evidence have proven women within the ranks leads to more civilian trust in the military or police institutions. They serve as role models and promote conditions that contribute to peace building in other ways such as prevention mechanisms, gender inclusion and grassroots peace movements.<sup>66</sup> The attributes of conciliation, ability to control aggression, leadership experience in running the household and a more gentle nature is a capability that women can bring that men by nature often cannot.<sup>67</sup> Studies have shown that women are more effective in getting information from rape victims. Victims are reluctant to report rape due to cultural, religious or society's imposition of personal or family shame. They are far more likely to confide in other women, this is especially true in non-Western societies. If we want women to come forward to report violations the first step is to recruit women to be available to receive them.<sup>68</sup>

Much of the empirical data supporting the role of women in uniforms comes from their role in peacekeeping and peace building operations. Integrated female uniformed and civilian units have demonstrated positive operational impacts globally. Examples include the 20 year presence in South Lebanon by the integrated Norwegian Battalion,

gender balanced operations in Namibia and UN gendered policing units in East Timor, Kosovo and Sierra Leon, Angola, Guatemala and Haiti. Uniformed women were found to be trusted more by the local populace in areas of internal strife such as Bosnia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Liberia and South Africa, particularly when they made up significant portion of the ranks.<sup>69</sup>

Multiple tools for promoting the role of women in defense and law enforcement include the Nepal Project (NP) and the International Network to Promote the Rule of Law (INP-ROL). The NP specifically addresses GBV, women's access to justice and women in the police force itself. The INP-ROL is an internet-based network on ROL including 300 females' members around the world.<sup>70</sup> These programs illustrate two examples where women within the ranks are contributing to stability and security.

Second, the international community must demand that the DRC *stop impunity* of all perpetrators. It must disarm, remove, arrest and prosecute all human rights abusers and mineral traffickers particularly those senior persons with command authority. There can be little development or peace in the DRC without individual human security. The Congolese government must dialogue with its neighbors regarding human rights violations, harboring perpetrators, natural resource exploitations and trade agreements. These all fuel SGVB in the eastern DRC. The U.S. should increase pressure on the Great Lakes Region in executing the LRA Disarmament Act. It should pass a similar piece of legislation in support of ridding the DRC of the FDLR. The people will never feel safe as long as they are allowed to operate in the DRC.

Third, the international community must encourage and technically support the DRC in managing its mining industry so it can protect its population, environment and

profits. The illegal extraction of the minerals contributes significantly to SGBV in the eastern DRC. The DRC should fully commit to the Extractives Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) whose principles are designed to strengthen transparency and good governance of the extractive industries. An external accountability mechanism should be in place based on poor governance indicators at the national level. The international community should continue pressure to ensure compliance with a credible tracking system to support both safety and profits of the population. The U.S. should unrelentingly execute the provisions of Sec 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Act to ensure due diligence regarding supply chain tracking of lucrative minerals.

Finally, the international community must encourage and provide funding and technical support to the DRC government in establishing a transition judiciary system. A judicial capability is critical in order to hold criminal and human rights violators to task, legitimize their governments 'right to rule' and bring stability and security to the country. The Liberian Role of Non-State Justice Systems in Fostering the ROL in Post-Conflict Societies Project is a helpful model. It illustrates how to provide guidance to national and international policymakers on the role of customary justice systems in post-conflict environments.

A state's ability to exact control over its territory is a prerequisite for development or other forms of social progress.<sup>71</sup> The recommendations above should be taken concurrently with the development recommendations below as both are interrelated and mutually reinforcing.



## HUMAN SECURITY THROUGH HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

*Social and Community Security.* Developing and decentralizing gender inclusive human capacity at the social, economic and political levels is essential to ensuring equity of the nation's full population. These are the interlocking axes of discrimination and oppression for women. At every level gender inclusion is the pathway to human and institutional development, good policy and governance.

The DRC possesses powerful legal and political tools to address SGBV and gender inclusion by having codified multiple national and international documents. Additionally, the UN appointed a special representative to combat SGBV and help countries such as the DRC strengthen rule of law, improve accountability and stop impunity. The newly created UN Women's Office recently received the former President of Chile as its Executive Director. The U.S. established the Office of Global Women's Issues to coordinate foreign policy issues related to the political, economical and social advancement of all women. The U.S. President and DOS both stress the importance of women foremost in the three pillars of our foreign policy, defense, diplomatic and development as agents of change who can drive economic growth and stability.<sup>72</sup> As stated the DRC government has the support of many influential document and political actors to deal with their SGBV, gender equity and consequential national security issues. Unfortunately a lack of political will and traditional attitudes and customs trump all of this support in many if not most cases, contradicting the rights afforded to women. The best hope is the many international NGOs who are doing yeoman's work to mitigate the effects of the gender inequity. A single point of contact (translate – Special Envoy) to harmonize and direct efforts could substantially advance the contributions of the whole of government (WoG) and the NGO communities. It has the potential to move

the DRC in a long overdue direction of reduced SGBV and improved stability and security. The vehicle for this movement can be found by gender inclusion in the social (education, health and religion), economic and political sectors.

If there is no sense of social cohesion, sense of interconnectedness or trust amongst each other it is difficult if even possible to ignite the engines of economy, political discourse or any other forum requiring cooperation or sharing.<sup>73</sup> Civil society organizations (CSO) are paramount in many third world countries and the DRC is no exception. Gender equality and the development of a strong civil society are important to bringing progress and stability to the eastern DRC. It is time for change. This will require a large number of people to change their attitude and behavior. Change starts with gender inclusive education.

*Educational Security.* Rising education leads to changes in social - economic levels and political culture. The path to inclusion, equity and a better way ahead for both genders and the DRC as a nation lies in education. It can be of no surprise that the DRC has struggled to advance considering only 17 Congolese had university degrees prior to their independence (1960). There was not one doctor, lawyer, dentist, engineer or like professional. Of nearly 5000 senior officials in the civil service only three were African. The Belgium's ensured that the Congolese were ill prepared to govern themselves and they did an effective job.<sup>74</sup> To advance and better participate in its development the DRC has to prioritize, budget and resource an upgraded gender inclusive education system. Currently the school life expectancy rate from primary through college is nine years for males and seven years for females.<sup>75</sup> No country can expect to thrive at this educational level.

Three priorities to act upon are inequality identification, education quality and financing. First, identify why a child is not in school. This is particularly true for girls who exist in an environment where they are far undereducated. Identify illiterate adult women who would like to be educated but have not had the opportunity. This may be due to distance, safety, affordability, planting and harvest requirements, IDP migration, or policy priority without accountability. The second challenge is a lack of schools, materials and teachers. There are numerous models of unconventional educational models to overcome this obstacle. For example, in India mobile classrooms are brought to remote areas emphasizing literacy, numeracy and essential life skill as well as education on hygiene, HIV/AIDS, acceptable gender norms and equality. They provide access, safety social integration and education that deliver a simple but effective way to improve educational outcomes for girls, boys and adults.<sup>76</sup> It is also a valuable venue to teach civic education, inclusion, tolerance and national identity. Third, the government at all levels must be held accountable in an area where they are currently failing their youth, women and their nation's potential recovery. It must finance and decentralize education in order to develop the country and facilitate economic recovery. U.S. and international donors can help this effort by tying assistance input to output at all levels. This serves to measure impact, manage results and ensure mutual accountability.

*Health Security.* The UNAID National Composite Policy Index (NCPI) 2007 lists disturbingly absent protections for women in the DRC's National Action Plan (NAP) and AIDS policy. It reflects a lack of equal access for women compared to men in prevention, treatment and care of HIV/AIDS and SGBV events. SGBV greatly increases

women's rates for HIV/AIDS as does the practice of polygamy. Lack of access to education and medical care exasperates this problem where there is great need to medical and psychological counseling. Limited infrastructure, transportation, funds and child care further hamper women's efforts for care. Local clinics and mobile clinics can serve to supplement the shortage.

An example of such clinics is operated by Merlin Medical Relief. It provides mobile primary and secondary care, targets areas impacted by SGBV and trains health care providers to do likewise. A second example is two hospitals that treat SGVB, Heal Africa and Panzi. Heal Africa runs its main hospital in a large city and establishes programs and training in the rural areas. Panzi is a key referral center for a new pathology that has emerged as a result of war, fistula. These are holes in the bladder, vagina and rectum that are caused by rapes, gang rapes or attacks using bayonets, wood or even guns through which the urine and/or feces pass uncontrollably. The Economist magazine recently estimated that 80% of the fistula cases in the DRC were a result of SGVB from the ongoing conflict. Women are often abandoned by their husband and families and forced to leave the community in an isolated existence due to the overwhelming smell. By dereliction in its responsibilities to provide adequate provide health care for its population the government perpetuates a major obstacle to the recovery of SGBV victims of all ages.<sup>77</sup>

*Religion.* Religion plays an important part in the daily lives of the population in the DRC which has an 80% following of Christianity (50% Catholic, 30% Protestant).<sup>78</sup> Religion can be a motivation for conflict and a patriarchal and religious structure that

subordinates women. Alternatively it can be a tool for promoting gender equality, reconciliation and peace building amongst genders and their respective communities.

The practical application of religious principles can be a development multiplier. It encourages providing and sharing good health care, food and water and serving your neighbor and community. It supports treating each other fairly, with respect and educating the proper response to the stigma placed upon raped individuals.<sup>79</sup> Faith based actors can work with local religious leaders in such areas as establishing early warning systems, reinforcing spiritual norms in confronting perpetrators and in the overall response to victims of SGBV. They bring compassion, emotional healing, forgiveness, hope and reassurance to individuals and communities affected by GBV, and serve as promoters of peace and reconciliation. The forward deployed churches are valued not only for their educational, medical and subsistence aid but also for serving as islands of integrity in a sea of corruption.<sup>80</sup> They are often trusted more by the people than the secular government actors.<sup>81</sup>

An example of women working through interfaith connectivity is Liberia's Women in Peace building Network. They played a key role in helping to broker an end to the Liberian civil war when Christian and Muslim women activists came together during the civil war. They managed to pressure leaders into signing the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement resulting to the end of over a decade of conflict.<sup>82</sup> The intersection between religion and human development is a critical value-added junction.

*Economic Security.* A World Bank report confirms that gender discrimination results in greater poverty, slower economic growth, weaker governance and a lower standard of living for the people in the respective society.<sup>83</sup> As well as contributing to a

break down of authority and creating predatory behavior the ongoing mineral conflicts have destroyed the DRC's economic infrastructure.<sup>84</sup> The top-down economic structures does not serve the people as the resources do not reach them. As a result they have become dependent upon NGO aid for their very subsistence rather than developing their own institutional capacity.

Boosting women's access to a reasonable level of basic economic rights would help mitigate the people's economic struggles. It helps increase gender equality, provides for the family and builds the nation's wealth. One venue for access is through micro financing done with non-profiteering entities. UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) impact studies indicate that it helps very poor households meet basic needs, protects against risk and improves household welfare. It facilitates stability and growth and empowers women by supporting gender equity with economic participation.

Examples of economic support initiatives include the NGO Apromev that trains women how to sew by hand and then by machine. If they are not literate then reading and writing classes are first. It sells their wares in the marketplace, giving the women back 30% of the earnings and supports an on-site elementary school with the rest. A second example is Peace for Pigs (PFP) where each participant in the project is provided with a female piglet as a "loan." The loan is to be repaid with one piglet from each of the first two litters of the participant's pig. Each participant is provided with a short course of instruction in husbandry. It fosters sustainable peace by rising agricultural productivity and the neighborly cooperative husbandry practices inherent in the project.<sup>85</sup> Empowering the women through economics has raised their status and respect in their communities and subsequently their social and political inclusion as well.

*Political Security.* Women's participation in civil society and the economic sphere must be extended to the political table at all levels of government. The roots of conflicts are often political in nature and require political solutions involving all affected parties.<sup>86</sup> As the most marginalized populations in conflict women are often left out of the peace negotiating process. There are valid reasons as to why this should not be the case. Beyond a variety of codified resolutions and legislation stating that women will be included it is a matter of equal rights for participation and potential for change. Stable, developed societies respect the rights of both genders. If half of the population is not represented in the peace process it is not as likely that their perspectives and needs will be properly addressed. Women have been shown to transcend political, ethnic and religious divides based on shared interest of family and community as demonstrated throughout the world in such conflict ridden areas as Ireland, Palestine and Israel, the Balkans, and Sierra Leon. They have proven themselves to be better bridge builders and are perceived to be less corrupt or threatening, yet they continue to be inadequately represented at all levels of political decision-making tables. Inasmuch, they are unable to ensure adequate policy responses targeting prevention, actual conflict or post conflict development.<sup>87</sup>

The DRC Constitution (2006, Article 14) requires that the state ensures the equality of gender representation at all levels, national, provincial and local. However, as the Electoral Institute of the Sustainability of Democracy in Africa reported on the 2006 elections, "these provisions seem only to be statements of intention, as there were no adequate mechanisms in place to ensure and enforce equal gender representation in the 2006 national and provincial elections".<sup>88</sup> Inclusion is vital and may require

transitional quotas that are enforced to overcome institutional and cultural traditions and biases. The National Democratic Institute (NDI) is an example of an organization that believes equitable participation of women in politics and government is essential to building and sustaining democracy. NDI helps women acquire the tools necessary to participate successfully in all aspects of the political process in challenging environments. It has helped women around the world to develop the skills needed to design a campaign strategy, identify the key people and organizations that can influence an election and communicate a clear strategy. They help women engage in legislatures, political parties and civil society as leaders, activists and informed citizens.<sup>89</sup> This is necessary to ensure that gender inclusive and family issues are included in policy, programming and agenda setting. The U.S. and international communities should again tie measured outcomes to foreign aid, particularly aid in support of elections.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The DRC government is dysfunctional. Their inability and disinterest in protecting their people, resources and territories has created national instability and insecurity that has global implication. The overarching strategy to resolve the conflict fueled GBV can be summed up in five recommendations to the DRC: (1) partner with a U.S. Special Envoy, (2) *end impunity*, (3) establish ROL forces and legal systems (4) enact mineral trade controls and (5) enforce existing gender equality supporting resolutions and laws at all social, economical and political levels. Programming must be resourced, promoted and targeted to the decentralized level to build civilian capacity by



the participation of women. See appendix D for specific details of the recommendations that the U.S. should take, and make to the DRC, UN and international community.

This paper does not support leveraging foreign military intervention action to influence the DRC government. It also does not support sustaining any country with endless aid. The U.S. and international community should apply unified political pressure on the DRC to protect and secure its people and resources. This pressure should be extended to the DRC's responsibility to develop all of its population and its institutions. The political response should be tied to condition-based aid that is measured, tracked and monitored. U.S. and international governmental assistance should require the DRC to account for the distribution and outcomes of all foreign aid. Foreign aid which makes up much of the DRC budget is the best possible leverage to encourage the DRC to adopt the recommendations above. The DRC has received billions of dollars in aid over the years but little to show for it in terms of stability, economic growth or human development. Historically and currently the DRC's chronic aid dependency provides no incentive or evidence that it is helping the country develop. The DRC has not demonstrated the political will to implement international or national laws addressing the issues that continue to destabilize their country. If the DRC cannot or will not comply, or make measurable advancements, with this expectation then all foreign aid should be cut off. The UN has passed resolutions and imposed sanctions and restrictions including an arms embargo, travel ban and assets freeze on individuals and entities. The ICC has issued multiple arrest warrants for rebel and military leaders. These efforts are helpful and should continue as should foreign aid that produces measured results, preferably coordinated and driven by a Special Envoy. This signals

mutual accountability and commitments for all parties. If the DRC is responsive and accountable in its duty to secure and develop its total population and institutions the assistance should continue. If they are non-compliant aid should cease. The global community does not have a magic wand to fix the DRC. We can partner with the DRC but ultimately it is the responsibility and purview of the DRC citizens to develop their country.

## CONCLUSIONS

Gender based violence is a serious problem that is an obstacle to equality, stability, security and peace throughout the world. It is rooted in inequity and discrimination at the individual and institutional levels primarily based on patriarchal, social and cultural norms. A plethora of legislation and resolutions exist to combat the problem. Sadly, there is a lack of political will at both the national and international level to address global solutions to what is a global problem.

It is an illusion to believe that we can combat the dysfunctional norms and politics at the root of these grave human rights violations or bring peace and prosperity to any fragile state through military means alone. A better response is to identify the conditions that create the instability and violence from a human security lens. Applying a bottom-up human security model secures and develops the population at the individual level. It requires long term multi-sectored solutions addressing the social context and the gender inequities that form a core element of this context. To continue to neglect this issue carries a high human, social services and economic cost to not just the individual and family but to the communities, societies and nations at large. Moral deliberation and application of justice are reasons in their own to address GBV and the

right thing to do. The inequities that lead to such conduct are inconsistent with the professed values of our society.

Pragmatically there are utilitarian reasons to engage in this discussion. GVB exacts a substantial burden on national and global economies and furthers suffering on the entire society. Billions of dollars spent have not stopped the DRC from being devoured by poor governance resulting in inept and corrupt social, political, legal and economic institutions. Military engagement is unaffordable, as eventually so is doing nothing. A policy of deliberate engagement with a gender inclusive human security approach would be a less costly way to deal with unstable areas of the world and likely more effective in the long run. Taking this approach in the DRC as well as other unstable and ungoverned territories would improve our national security status by non-kinetically assisting failing states in managing their ungoverned space, protecting access to valuable natural resources and meeting our R2P international requirements.

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