



IN BRIEF



# WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

## MOLDOVA

Photo credit: UN Women/Stela Donțu

### What's the Issue?

In October 2020, the UN Security Council marked two decades since the landmark Resolution 1325 (UN SCR 1325) was adopted, which, for the first time, enshrined the essential role of women in securing and maintaining peace. Being aware that across the world 2 billion people live in countries affected by conflict<sup>1</sup>, UN Women supports women's full and equal representation and participation at all levels of peace processes and security efforts as an essential approach to build and sustain peace.

As of August 2021, for the first time in its history, Moldova has a woman Minister of Internal Affairs in a Government led by a woman Prime Minister.

Still, women are significantly underrepresented in Moldova's defence and security sectors. As of January, 2021, out of the total number of people engaged within the National Army, only 20,2 % are women<sup>2</sup> (a slight increase if compared to 17% in 2015<sup>3</sup>). The Military Academy started to enrol female candidates only since 2012. Although women are currently enrolled in some pre-deployment missions, the number of women peacekeepers is still low. Of the total number of National Army soldiers who took part in international missions/operations in 2020, only 2% were women. General Police Inspectorate (GPI) recorded a slight increase of women's representation over the last few years. As of 2020, women represent 21.88% of GPI's staff, with only 11% of all decision-making positions being held by women<sup>4</sup>. While the share of women in the sector has increased, high fluctuation and retention within the system remain a serious challenge.

In the frame of ongoing negotiations process between Chisinau and Tiraspol within the Transnistrian settlement process, 2 women from the Moldovan Government have been acting as lead negotiators by now and, while women are represented up to 40% in the 11 working groups established, gender equality issues are rarely considered and discussed with exception of domestic violence.

Prevailing and persistent gender stereotypes with regards women's role in security and defense still acts as strong deterrent to their enrollment (or participation) and career progressing. In spite of changing environment, still 20% of Moldovan citizens believe that men are better suited for security sector jobs.

### Our Solutions

UN Women's work on women, peace, and security is guided by 10 UN Security Council resolutions, led by UN SCR 1325, and is bolstered by a number of related normative frameworks<sup>5</sup>, which make up the broader Women, Peace and Security (WPS) agenda.

Moldova registered a significant milestone in March 2018, when the National Programme on Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security for 2018-2021 (NAP 1325)<sup>6</sup> and the Action Plan on its implementation were adopted. UN Women supported national authorities in this endeavour by providing extensive technical support to the Government in raising awareness and knowledge on the WPS agenda and mainstreaming gender equality in the security and defence sectors, as well as in the preparatory processes preceding the development of Moldova's NAP on UN SCR 1325.

UN Women committed itself, including through its Strategic Note for 2018-2022<sup>7</sup>, to provide continuous support to relevant governmental institutions on advancing Women, Peace and Security agenda and on achieving specific results envisaged in the NAP 1325. The cooperation between UN Women, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA) of the Republic of Moldova were consolidated with the signing of two 3-year Memoranda of Understanding in 2018 (July and August respectively).

<sup>1</sup> OCHA. Global Humanitarian Overview. 2019.

<sup>2</sup> State Chancellery. 2018-2020 Report on implementation of the National Action Plan in human rights. 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Strategy for ensuring gender equality between men and women in the Republic of Moldova for 2017-2021

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/peace-and-security/global-norms-and-standards>.

<sup>6</sup> <http://lex.justice.md/md/374810/>

<sup>7</sup> UN Women Moldova Strategic note for 2018-2022



## How We Make a Difference

**Support for the adoption of NAP 1325:** An important breakthrough occurred in May 2017, when the Government adopted the Decision (Order no. 54-d from May 29, 2017) which formally launched the process of developing the first National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, which was adopted in March 2018, following an inclusive and participatory process, involving all relevant institutions. In this process, UN Women partnered with the Government and civil society to raise awareness on WPS agenda and on UN SCR 1325 by designing and delivering national and international capacity building sessions, international study visits and exchange of experience events and development of informative and knowledge products, including the [Manual on Women, Peace and Security](#)<sup>1</sup>. UN Women supported the drafting of NAP 1325 by contracting expertise to assist the Government's Working Group. Considering that 2021 is the last year of NAP 1325 implementation, UN Women committed to support the Government both in the evaluation of the first NAP, as well as in the development of the country's next generation of the 1325 Program and NAP, respectively.

**Combating sexual harassment:** In 2019, UN Women, in partnership with CSOs, supported the development of two Regulations to prevent and combat sexual harassment in the Law Enforcement and Defence sectors. The Regulations were approved by the MoD on 7 July, 2020, and by the MIA - on 4 September, 2020, entering into effect immediately. UN Women developed knowledge products and delivered capacity building for around 35 staff of MoD and MIA on combating sexual harassment. Considered to be a good practice, the Regulations were further shared with the National Administration of Penitentiaries and Customs Service for further adoption by the latter. Since 2018, UN Women delivered capacity building on combating sexual harassment to around 180 staff from relevant WPS institutions.

**Marking the 20-year anniversary of UN SCR 1325:** To take stock of achievements obtained after 20 years of UN SCR 1325, in 2020, UN Women, in partnership with MoD, other UN entities and civil society, organized an online international scientific and practical conference „Women, Peace and Security Agenda: Ensuring Human Security, Promoting Sustainable Peace and Preventing Conflicts”, attended by over 100 participants from 14 countries. The conference reflected on the role and the importance of implementing the UN SCR 1325, highlighting the main results achieved by the security and defence authorities and sharing best practices among participants via strengthened cross-country cooperation.

**Building capacities on WPS agenda:** In 2018-2020, UN Women, in partnership with civil society and security and defence institutions, enhanced gender equality capacities of over 1,400 representatives of state authorities with duties to advance the WPS and UN SCR 1325. With the aim to institutionalize and sustain the capacity development efforts, during 2021-2022, UN Women signed a partnership agreement with the Academy for Public Administration for the development of advanced training curricula on gender equality and leadership, GRB and WPS and delivery of trainings to more than 100 representatives of MOD, MIA and its structures, Customs Service, National Penitentiary Administration, 3 Women's Associations from defence and security sectors.

**Studies and research:** Society is still reticent to accept women working in law enforcement and defence sectors. Stereotypical perceptions were revealed by the study [“Analysis of general perceptions on women and men's representation in security and defence sectors”](#)<sup>2</sup> conducted by UN Women, in partnership with CSOs published in 2019. To assess existing structural and infrastructural barriers which hinder gender mainstreaming in police and defence sectors, UN Women, together with Center

“Partnership for Development”, developed [the Feasibility Study on implementation of temporary special measures and reasonable accommodation for gender mainstreaming in Ministry of Internal Affairs and Ministry of Defence](#)<sup>3</sup>. The study takes forward: (i) Special measures to ensure a fair representation of women and men in all positions and levels of the security sector; (ii) Special measures to ensure the reconciliation of work and family life in the security system; (iii) Reasonably accommodating infrastructure measures to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in the security system and comes with specific recommendations to improve gender balance.

**Support women's networks and associations:** UN Women is committed to support National Army Women's Association (NAWA), National Association of Women in the Internal Affairs System (NAWIAS), and Association of Women in Police (AWP) as promoters of gender equality within their institutions. Between 2018-2020, UN Women supported all 3 women's associations to strengthen their organizational capacities. Respectively, they initiated the development of Strategic Plans, which aim at advancing WPS agenda within the respective institutions. The overall support entails the provision of capacity building based on the priorities identified in the Strategic/Annual Plans to ensure gender mainstreaming and advancing the WPS agenda within defence and security sectors.

**Promote and strengthen women's participation in conflict settlement processes from economic and social security community perspectives, with a focus on the left bank of the Nistru River:** In this respect, UN Women facilitated a series of consultations with grassroots organizations and GE advocates on the identification of underlying causes to the perpetuation of gender inequalities as well as recommendations for strengthening women's voices at community level and placing relevant issues pertaining to women's rights and gender equality on the agenda of the negotiation process. The recommendations also serve as baseline for conceptualizing initiatives for dialogue and strengthening economic and social rights of women at community level from both sides of Nistru river. UN Women plans to pilot a number of initiatives, discussion clubs, capacity building events at grassroots level aimed at enhancing the leadership role of women.

<sup>1</sup> Military Academy of Armed Forces “Alexandru cel Bun”, UN Women. Manual on gender mainstreaming in security and defence sectors. 2017.

<sup>2</sup> Center for Partnership Development, UN Women. Analysis on general perceptions on women and men representation in security and defence sectors. 2019.

<sup>3</sup> Center for Partnership Development, UN Women. Feasibility study on implementation of special temporary measures and reasonable accommodation for gender equality promotion in the sector of internal affairs and defence. 2020

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