

## MUST BOYS BE BOYS?



ENDING SEXUAL  
EXPLOITATION  
& ABUSE IN UN  
PEACEKEEPING  
MISSIONS

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am thankful for the women's advocates in the countries of Sierra Leone, Liberia and Haiti for alerting me and educating me on the topic of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers. It is due to their ceaseless work that this issue has finally become acknowledged at the United Nations. I would also like to acknowledge the hard work that the advocates for gender equity and women's rights around the world do every day.

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## NOTE ON THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The photographs in this report are meant solely to illustrate peacekeepers and their work. None of the people depicted are either perpetrators or victims of sexual exploitation and abuse. All photos were taken during RI's peacekeeping assessment missions.

*Cover Photo:  
Two Namibian  
peacekeepers monitor  
the border between  
Sierra Leone and Liberia.*

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*“If we fail... to approve decisive and visible steps to limit sexual abuse  
in UN peacekeeping, then it will have serious implications  
for the future of peacekeeping. I do not say this lightly.”*

Jean-Marie Guéhenno  
Under-Secretary-General  
for Peacekeeping Operations  
Address to the Special Committee  
on Peacekeeping Operations  
April 4, 2005

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACOTA	African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance
AMIS	African Union Mission in Sudan
CAECOPAZ	Argentine Joint Peacekeeping Operation Training Center
CECOPAC	Centro Conjunto Para Operaciones de Paz de Chile
CIVPOL	UN Civilian Police
DDR	Demobilization, Disarmament, and Reintegration
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
GBV	Gender-Based Violence
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDP	Internally Displaced Persons
KAIPTC	Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre
MILOB	Military Observers
MINUSTAH	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti
MONUC	United Nations Mission in Democratic Republic of Congo
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OGA	Office of Gender Advisor
RI	Refugees International
SRSR	Special Representatives to the Secretary-General
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNMEE	United Nations Mission in Eritrea
UNMIBH	United Nations Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNTAC	United Nations Mission in Cambodia

<p>...a hyper-masculine culture that encourages sexual exploitation and abuse and a tradition of silence have evolved within [peacekeeping missions].</p>	<p><b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b></p> <p>In early 2004, abuses by peacekeepers in the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) made international headlines and were subsequently the subject of UN Security Council meetings and US Congressional hearings. However, sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers is not limited to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Charges of sexual exploitation and abuse have dogged UN peacekeeping missions around the world and Refugees International (RI) has found that the UN peacekeeping missions in Liberia and Haiti are equally vulnerable to such abuse. This report provides a comprehensive look at the causes of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers in Liberia and Haiti, the efforts made by the UN to address the problem, and concrete recommendations for further action.</p> <p>Effective peacekeeping operations can transform conflict and bring about a stable peace so that displaced people can return home and societies can begin to rebuild. Allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse cast a dark shadow over the positive impacts that UN peacekeepers have made and compromise their mission to secure the peace. However, it is essential that a thorough and honest discussion of the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers occurs to ensure that peacekeeping missions are able to accomplish their goals of protecting the vulnerable.</p> <p>Since the bulk of personnel in peacekeeping missions are men, a hyper-masculine culture <i>that encourages sexual exploitation and abuse</i> and a tradition of silence have evolved within them. This culture has produced a tolerance for extreme behaviors such as sexual exploitation and abuse. “What do you think is going to happen when you have thousands of men away from home?” is the common response to the behavior. This “boys will be boys” attitude will continue to taint the debate until approaches to sexual exploitation are changed to reflect the fact that sexual exploitation and abuse are primarily problems of abuse of power that merit disciplinary action, and only secondarily problems of sexual behavior.</p> <p>In October 2000, the UN Security Council passed UN Security Council Resolution 1325, a resolution on women, peace and security that mandates that the commanders of UN peacekeeping missions must take into account the differential impact of their actions on women and men. This resolution provides a potential basis for combating the masculine culture within peacekeeping missions. However, the process of mainstreaming gender into peacekeeping missions, or incorporating gender perspectives into all areas of work, has yet to truly take hold within the UN missions that RI visited.</p> <p>Responses to sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeeping missions vary. The policies and guidelines set by UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) about sexual exploitation and abuse in missions are not always followed in the field. The attitude of senior management in UN peacekeeping missions towards sexual exploitation and abuse can make a major difference in ending the problem. Effective leadership that conveys a serious commitment to a “zero tolerance” policy influences the culture of the organization and the ability of the organization to address problems. RI recommends that the Special Representatives to the Secretary-General (SRSG) in UN peacekeeping missions as well as all managers must be held accountable for ensuring that sexual exploitation and abuse are taken seriously and perpetrators are punished.</p> <p>While experts on the issue often focus mostly on military personnel, the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse by civilian personnel may be much larger yet less visible. The majority of the complaints heard by RI in the field were about expatriate men, both UN employees and others, carrying on inappropriate relationships with local women. In reality, it is easier to dis-</p>
<p>ii</p>	<p>MUST BOYS BE BOYS? ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION &amp; ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS</p>

<p>cipline military personnel in peacekeeping missions than civilians. While there are command structures in place in the military, the multiplicity of civilian agencies and personnel in these missions makes investigating and punishing their abusive behavior more difficult.</p> <p>One of the most common suggestions for addressing sexual exploitation and abuse and mainstreaming gender within UN peacekeeping missions is to provide training to the troops. Pre- and post-deployment training are critical to reducing or eliminating some of the problems associated with troop deployments, but training in and of itself is insufficient. There must be follow-up and monitoring of training results. RI also recommends that regional peacekeeping institutes incorporate UN curriculum and expand to support troop-contributing countries. Additionally, troop-contributing countries must work more closely with local women’s groups to incorporate culturally appropriate curriculum into their military training.</p> <p>While the UN is focusing on the appointment of personnel to address allegations of exploitation and abuse, too often information on <i>how</i> to report an abuse and <i>what</i> will happen to the perpetrator is unclear to UN mission personnel, their colleagues in humanitarian agencies and most importantly, the local community. While the UN has begun to distribute materials to publicize the problems of trafficking and exploitation, public information campaigns still lag behind. Local humanitarian agencies and women must be informed how to report an allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse. Every person in the reporting chain—the person who gets the initial call, the police, the investigators, the officers—must understand and practice gender sensitivity. For complicated issues such as sexual exploitation and abuse, where the victims are not always certain that it is their right to complain, it is imperative. There must also be feedback that informs the victims of the investigation outcome and the judicial process, if any.</p> <p>Currently peacekeeping troops report to their home country commanders. If a soldier is found guilty, that person is sent back to his country for discipline. It is very difficult, if not impossible, for victims and their families to determine what, if any, actions have been taken. In order for local communities and victims to trust the UN enough to begin reporting violations, victims must know they will be protected and treated with respect when they report and that there will be action taken against the perpetrator.</p> <p>Finally, because eradicating sexual exploitation by peacekeepers is intrinsically linked to improving the status of women in post-conflict countries, all programs undertaken within these countries must challenge the social, cultural, and political determinants of discrimination against women. Programming must seek to include women in the decisions that will impact their lives.</p> <p>The “boys will be boys” attitude which has characterized previous UN peacekeeping missions is slowly changing. Positive changes include the appointment of a female Special Representative to the Secretary-General to lead the UN peacekeeping mission in Burundi, the inclusion of gender advisors on assessment missions, and increased importance of the office of gender advisors within peacekeeping missions. In addition, in July 2004, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan asked the Permanent Representative of Jordan, His Royal Highness Prince Zeid Ra’ad Zeid al-Hussein, a former civilian peacekeeper and the UN ambassador of one of the major peacekeeping troop contributors, to prepare a comprehensive report for the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations.</p> <p>Zeid’s report, “A Comprehensive Strategy to Eliminate Future Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations,” is an honest and far-reaching account that makes numerous important and bold recommendations, notably that troop-contributing countries</p>	<p>The “boys will be boys” attitude which has characterized previous UN peacekeeping missions is slowly changing.</p>
<p>WWW.REFUGEESINTERNATIONAL.ORG</p>	<p>iii</p>

**The UN must  
move beyond  
strong rhetoric  
and take action.**

hold on-site courts martial for guilty parties and adopt formal memoranda of understanding in advance of deployment so that the cases of sexual exploitation and abuse are forwarded to their competent national or military authorities. RI supports the major recommendations in the Secretary-General's report and urges the major troop-contributing countries to adopt them immediately. While the report is an important first step, all members of the United Nations must fully support these initiatives.

In principle, every SRSG and military commander has a "zero tolerance" policy when it comes to sexual exploitation and abuse. But without the ability to actually implement these recommendations, zero tolerance is meaningless. The UN must move beyond strong rhetoric and take action. As the UN continues to discuss new reforms to strengthen its agencies, it must enact the recommendations outlined in this report to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse and the tolerance of these activities throughout the United Nations.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Mainstreaming gender principles into UN peacekeeping missions**

- DPKO move to hire more male gender advisors to counter-balance the idea that the gender is only for women;
- Donors and others interested in effective peacekeeping and UN reform continue to advocate for increased attention to mainstreaming of gender principles within all UN bodies;
- UN peacekeeping missions separate the positions of Gender Advisor and Sexual Exploitation Focal Point or personnel involved in conduct and discipline units. If this is not possible, adequate resources, both financial and human, must be allocated to the position;
- Member states provide more human resources within DPKO Headquarters for gender mainstreaming;
- Member states actively put forward the names of qualified female candidates for senior management positions;
- The UN Security Council encourage more female representation in troop-contributing countries;
- Troop-contributing countries examine their policies for recruiting women in the military and police forces and sending them to peacekeeping missions and send numbers of females proportionate with the national average of women in their security forces;
- US Department of State insist that the contractors it uses to recruit for civilian police officers provide women for UN peacekeeping missions and, if they fail to do so, discontinue their contracts;
- The UN deploy key personnel such as Code of Conduct officers, Senior Gender Advisors and investigators of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in the early stages of peacekeeping missions.

<p><b>Changing attitudes within senior management of UN peacekeeping operations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UN make measures to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse as part of the performance goals for all managers and commanders and rate managerial performance in accordance with the actual implementation of these goals;</li> <li>• An independent watchdog organization be set up by humanitarian agencies and donors to monitor actual implementation of UN policies in the field;</li> <li>• Any SRSR or senior UN employee who fails to implement measures to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse be removed from his or her position.</li> </ul> <p><b>Focusing on civilian personnel</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Secretary-General appoint a group of experts to review UN personnel rules and recommend ways to ensure that loopholes that allow civilian personnel to avoid prosecution be tightened;</li> <li>• The UN amend Staff Regulations to specifically provide that acts of sexual exploitation and abuse constitute serious misconduct.</li> </ul> <p><b>Training within UN peacekeeping missions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on UN universal mandates such as gender mainstreaming and enforcement of human rights should be mandatory for civilian and military personnel;</li> <li>• DPKO must ensure that training on gender concepts and human rights is carried out by bona fide trainers with expertise on the subject matter;</li> <li>• Donors fund regional peacekeeping training centers to mainstream gender into all training courses and provide training on sexual exploitation and abuse prevention for troop-contributing countries;</li> <li>• DPKO should conduct an evaluation to determine what messages resonate with peacekeepers and the effectiveness of their trainings;</li> <li>• Militaries from troop-contributing countries actively work with local women’s groups in their own countries to design culturally appropriate responses to mainstreaming gender and combating and combating sexual exploitation and abuse;</li> <li>• Country commanders train their troops using country-specific training modules and verify completion of training in writing to the Force Commander;</li> <li>• Military commanders and civilian personnel supervisors follow up and continually emphasize training on sexual exploitation and abuse.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improving access to the UN complaint system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Information directors for UN peacekeeping missions design programs along with local women’s groups to inform and educate the local population regarding sexual exploitation and abuse;</li> </ul>	
<p>WWW.REFUGEESINTERNATIONAL.ORG</p>	<p>v</p>

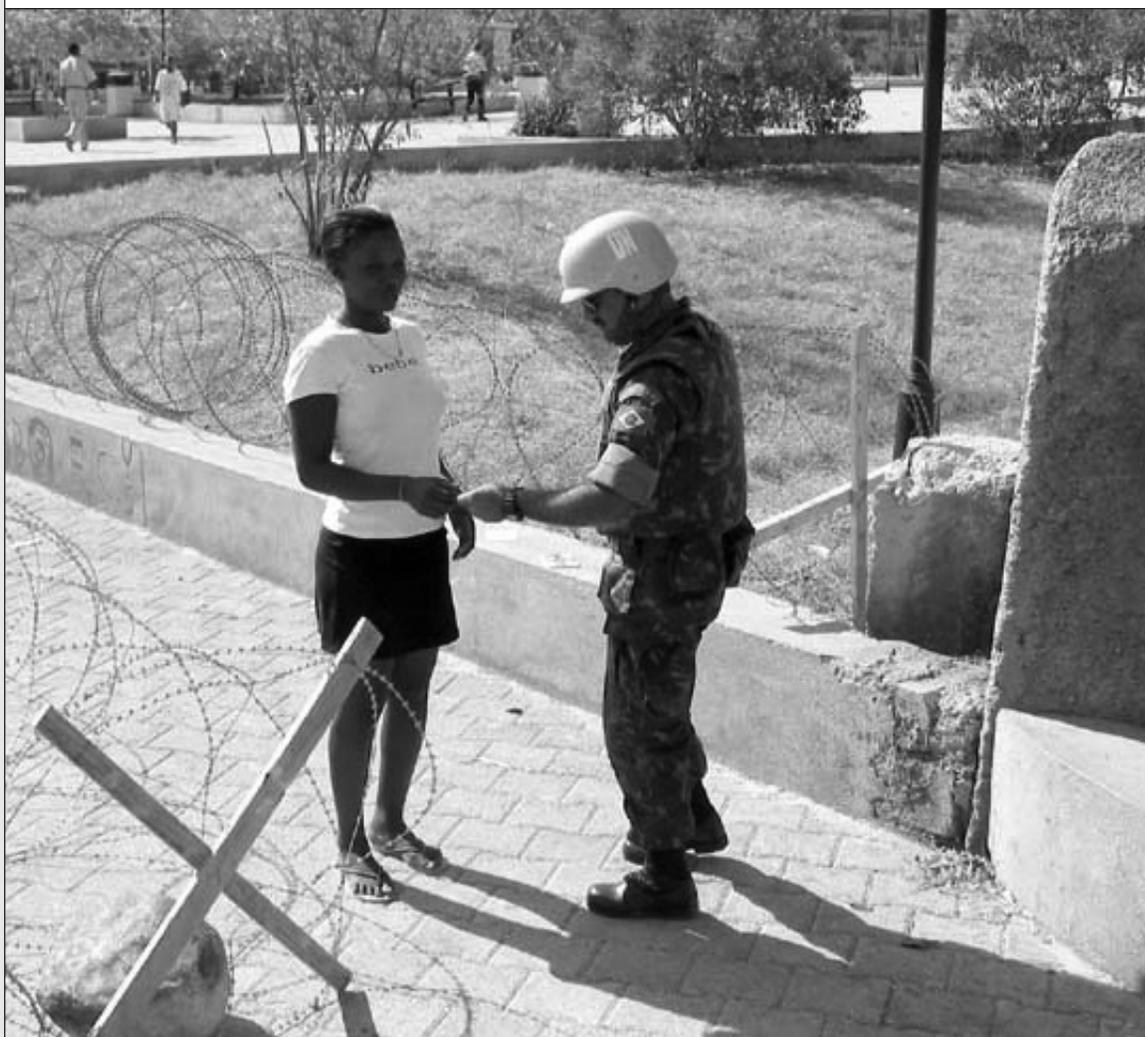
- Public Information programs in UN Peacekeeping missions communicate the findings of investigations into sexual exploitation and abuse;
- The UN actively move to protect “whistle-blowers” by strengthening confidentiality rules;
- The UN install a person focused on coordinating actions towards trafficking in all UN peacekeeping missions.

**Empowering women in the local communities**

- Donors fund income-generation projects and micro-credit schemes aimed at women in post-conflict countries;
- Donors and designers of DDR programs pay particular attention to the reintegration needs of former female combatants;
- All donors ensure that programs in post-conflict countries mainstream a gender perspective and encourage women’s empowerment in social, political, and economic activities.

*A Brazilian peacekeeper distributes food and clothing to a Haitian woman in the Bel Air neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, as part of a ‘hearts and minds’ campaign to help local people.*

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Peter Gantz



## MUST BOYS BE BOYS?

### ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION & ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

#### INTRODUCTION

Charges of sexual exploitation and abuse continue to dog UN peacekeeping missions around the world.\* In early 2004, the abuses by the peacekeepers in the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC) made international headlines and were subsequently the subject of Security Council meetings and US Congressional hearings. However, this problem is not limited to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). While peacekeepers are sent into post-conflict zones to provide protection to the most vulnerable, the cruel irony is that some use this position of trust to prey upon the vulnerable. Often, women and children offer the only material asset they have to trade, their bodies, to these peacekeepers as a method of survival.

Effective peacekeeping operations can transform conflict and bring about a stable peace so that displaced people can return home and societies can begin to rebuild. The thousands of men and women who have been deployed by the United Nations to help disarm warring groups and protect innocent civilians are key to ending years of bloodshed. Allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse cast a dark shadow over the positive impacts that UN peacekeepers have made. However, it is essential that a thorough and honest discussion of the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers occurs in order to ensure that all peacekeeping missions are fully able to accomplish their goals of protecting the vulnerable. Allegations of exploitation and abuse only compromise their mission to secure the peace.

In July 2004, Secretary-General Kofi Annan asked the Permanent Representative of Jordan,

His Royal Highness Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid al-Hussein, a former civilian peacekeeper and the UN ambassador of one of the major peacekeeping troop contributors, to prepare a comprehensive report for the UN Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. This report, "A Comprehensive Strategy to Eliminate Future Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations" (referenced throughout this paper as the Zeid report) was released in July 2005 and set forth its findings and recommendations under four broad categories:

- Rules and Standards of Conduct;
- Investigative processes;
- Organizational, managerial and command responsibility; and
- Individual disciplinary, financial and criminal accountability.

The Zeid report makes numerous important and bold recommendations, notably that troop-contributing countries hold on-site court-martials for guilty parties and adopt formal memoranda of understanding in advance of deployment, so that cases of sexual exploitation and abuse are forwarded to their competent national or military authorities. The Zeid report also recommends establishing a professional investigative capacity with full participation of the troop-contributing country concerned and requiring managers and commanders to be accountable for creating an organizational culture that prevents sexual exploitation and abuse. The Zeid report calls for individual accountability for UN peacekeepers found guilty of abuses. The UN Security Council "reiterated the importance of ensuring that

**Allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse cast a dark shadow over the positive impacts that UN peacekeepers have made.**

\* Sexual exploitation and abuse is defined in the Special Representative of the Secretary General's bulletin to members of the UN Mission in Liberia of 2003 as "Any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another."

sexual exploitation and abuse are properly investigated and appropriately punished... and underlines the provision that an environment in which sexual exploitation and abuse are not tolerated is primarily the responsibility of managers and commanders.”<sup>2</sup>

Refugees International supports the major recommendations in the Zeid report and urges troop-contributing countries to immediately adopt them. RI recognizes, however, that financial and human resources will be required to support the overall strategy.

While the report is an important first step to ending sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions, these initiatives must be fully upheld and funded by all members of the United Nations after the scandals have died. If international donors are serious about ending sexual exploitation and ensuring the protection of victims of conflict throughout the world, they must give the United Nations the resources that it needs to fight this problem within the framework of its peacekeeping operations.

*A Namibian peacekeeper in Liberia takes a break from his duties of monitoring the peaceful return of refugees .*

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Sarah Martin



## THE SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM

### ***Culture of Gender-based Violence in West Africa and Haiti***

Long before the peacekeepers arrived, the civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone were characterized by high rates of rape and other gender-based violence against civilians. The primary victims of this violence were women and girl children, although men also suffered. Forced conscription of boys was common, a devastating component of the conflicts that is often overlooked in discussions of gender-based violence. The armed forces used sexual violence to brutalize recruits and break the bonds between families; for example, conscripts (often child combatants) were forced to rape their mothers and sisters. Armed forces on both sides also abducted girls and women, using them as “bush wives” or sexual slaves.

In 2003 and 2004 Refugees International (RI) interviewed women in internally displaced persons (IDP) camps in Liberia, refugee camps in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone, and remote areas of Liberia and Sierra Leone who described the sexual humiliation and forced or coerced prostitution they suffered at the hands of the warring parties.\* While all women were at some risk of gender-based violence, the women who were affiliated with the armed forces were more at risk.<sup>3</sup> In Liberia, some reports put the number of women who had experienced physical or sexual violence at the hands of a combatant at between 60-70 percent.<sup>4</sup> In addition to mass gender-based violence during the conflict, Sierra Leone was also the site of the infamous sexual exploitation scandal of 2002 when it was alleged that members of the humanitarian community were coercing sex from female refugees in exchange for humanitarian assistance.<sup>5</sup>

In Haiti, sexual exploitation has been a way of life for many generations. The poverty-stricken population has long been forced to turn to commercial sex work to support itself and trafficking in women and children is rampant.<sup>6</sup> The Haitian National Police and the former army of Haiti have also been charged with raping women and children with little fear of recrimination by authorities. Even though prostitution is illegal, women line the streets of Petionville, the wealthy suburb above Port-au-Prince, to sell themselves to wealthy Haitians and foreign men who visit the restaurants and clubs there. According to a women’s rights activist in Haiti interviewed by RI, prostitutes even have to pay a portion of their earnings to the government.

### ***Sexual Exploitation in UN Peacekeeping Missions***

An influx of large numbers of unaccompanied foreign men into post-conflict societies is often associated with increased incidents of prostitution and gender-based violence.<sup>+</sup> While recent press reports focus on charges of sexual exploitation and abuse within UN peacekeeping missions, it is important to recognize that most national militaries around the world have had to address the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse. Even the best trained militaries must still work to eliminate this problem among its forces. According to the US Department of Defense Inspector General’s 2004 survey of three military academies, one in every seven female cadets reported they had been a victim of sexual abuse in the previous five years and 50% of the women at the three academies reported being sexually harassed. The victims only reported a third of the incidents of sexual misconduct. In 2004, the US Department of Defense had 1,275 allegations of assault of service members by fellow soldiers. Duke University Law

...it is important to recognize that most national militaries around the world have had to address the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse.

\*Refugees International conducted interviews with local populations, government officials and UN staff that are referred to frequently throughout this report. Interviews were conducted in Liberia and Guinea from November 3, 2003 to November 24, 2003; in Liberia, Côte D’Ivoire and Sierra Leone from March 5, 2004 to March 30, 2004; in Liberia from December 5, 2004 to December 18, 2004; and in Haiti from February 15, 2005 to February 25, 2005.

<sup>+</sup>While women may be capable of the same crimes, men are the most often mentioned in conjunction with sexual exploitation and abuse of local women and children.

<p><b>One of the most troubling aspects... was the accusation that members of the UN peacekeeping force offered food to vulnerable displaced children and women as payment for having sex with them.</b></p>	<p>Professor Madeline Morris noted that “the ratio of military rapes to civilian rapes is substantially larger than the ratio of military rates to civilian rates of other violent crime.”<sup>7</sup> The U.S. Department of Defense drafted a new regulation in 2004 that would allow U.S. troops to be subject to courts martial for using prostitutes in response to concerns that US troops were contributing to human trafficking in areas near their overseas bases.<sup>8</sup></p> <p>Since UN peacekeeping missions are made up of troops contributed from militaries around the world, they are subject to the same problems as the individual militaries that contribute troops to them. While UN peacekeeping missions are not the only military organizations to face these issues, the charges made against peacekeeping troops are particularly disturbing because of the unique nature of peacekeeping. The UN Security Council deploys military troops in order to protect vulnerable populations from the violence of the warring parties. In the words of the Zeid report, the UN “should not in any way increase the suffering of vulnerable sectors of the population, which has often been devastated by war or civil conflict.”<sup>9</sup> As one peacekeeping expert told Refugees International (RI) “the United Nation’s mission is not to undermine rule of law but rather to strengthen it. When they blatantly disregard local laws about prostitution and encourage the cover-up of violations within the mission, they are poisoning the mission and corrupting the mandate.”</p> <p>One of the most troubling aspects of the recent sexual exploitation scandal in the DRC was the accusation that members of the UN peacekeeping force in that country (MONUC) offered food to vulnerable displaced children and women as payment for having sex with them. Bunia, located in the Ituri region in war-torn eastern DRC, was under siege by warring rebel groups in 2003. Residents of nearby villages and of the town</p> <p>itself fled and set up shelters in MONUC’s headquarters and next to the UN peacekeeping troops’ camps, trusting that the UN troops would protect them from the violence.</p> <p>According to a report in the UK newspaper, <i>The Independent</i>, “Many of the girls and women had been raped by the warring factions and left with children to support. With no husbands to assist them and facing stigmatization from their families, they turned to the Uruguayan and Moroccan peacekeepers stationed directly across from the camp. One way for them to barter for food was to offer to have sex with the peacekeepers. ‘It is easy for us to get to the UN soldiers,’ explained one woman, ‘We climb through the fence when it is dark, sometimes once a night, sometimes more.’”</p> <p>One camp worker, who refused to give his name and worked for Atlas, the NGO in charge of managing the camp, said: “Yes, we know that girls go and visit the UN soldiers every night. There is nothing to stop them, and the girls need food. ‘Going over to the camp is OK because the soldiers are kind to me and don’t point their guns like the other soldiers did,’ one girl says.”<sup>10</sup></p> <p>Sexual misconduct has long characterized UN peacekeeping missions. During the UN mission in Cambodia (UNTAC) from 1992 to 1993, the number of sex houses and “Thai-style” massage parlors multiplied and the number of prostitutes rose from 6,000 to 25,000, including an increased number of child prostitutes.<sup>11</sup> Cambodia’s HIV rates rose and sexually transmitted infections spread among Cambodian prostitutes.* Cambodians complained to the UN mission about UNTAC personnel’s disorderly behavior, drinking and association with prostitutes. The mission’s Special Representative to the Secretary-General (SRSG), Yasushi Akashi famously replied, “Boys will be boys,” and no disciplinary action was taken.</p> <p><small>* While there was no proof that the UN personnel contributed to the spread of HIV/AIDS, the accusation of being responsible for introducing HIV into post-conflict countries has continued to follow UN peacekeepers. In September 2004, a Sudanese government official in Darfur told RI that he doesn’t want UN peacekeepers who will spread AIDS in his country.</small></p>
<p>4</p>	<p>MUST BOYS BE BOYS? ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION &amp; ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS</p>

<p>UNMEE, the UN peacekeeping mission which has been in Eritrea since 2000, also experienced numerous sex scandals involving UN peacekeepers and the local population. Italian, Danish and Slovak peacekeepers were expelled in separate incidents for having sex with minors. In 2001, three Danish soldiers were found guilty of having sex with a 13-year-old Eritrean girl. In 2002, an Irish soldier was caught making pornographic films of Eritrean women. The main woman in the film said that she was the Irish soldier's girlfriend and that they planned to marry. She was sentenced to two years in jail. Since then, several women accused of being prostitutes were arrested. The Irish soldier was sentenced to sixteen days detention and dismissed from the military. In June 2003, the Irish military police investigated allegations that seven Irish peacekeepers used prostitutes who were as young as 15.<sup>12</sup></p> <p>Not only military troops are accused of sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions. In 2000, U.S. civilians contracted to serve in the UN Mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (UNMIBH) by Dyncorp, a private US military contracting firm, were investigated for trafficking in young women in Bosnia. Human Rights Watch described Bosnia as "absolutely littered with brothels."<sup>13</sup> Also implicated in the trafficking scandal were Jordanians, Pakistanis, and German military troops. According to sources, however, in most cases, allegations were hushed up and officers sent home.<sup>14</sup></p> <p><b><i>The Culture of UN Peacekeeping Missions</i></b></p> <p>One of the problems in addressing sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions is the hyper-masculine culture and the tradition of silence that has evolved from this culture. The bulk of personnel in peacekeeping missions are men. As of July 2004, women represented 4.4% of civilian police and 1% of military personnel working in peacekeeping operations. As of June 2004, women constituted 27.5% of international</p>	<p>civilian personnel serving in peacekeeping operations, up from 24% in 2002.<sup>15</sup></p> <p>"The pattern of behavior of these peacekeepers, their attitudes, justification and sexual exploitation and abuse of younger girls has much in common with the activities of the so-called 'sex-tourist,'" wrote Paul Higate in his 2003 study on the issue.<sup>16</sup> Many local people criticized peacekeepers for such activities. For example, a Liberian man complained to Refugees International (RI) in December 2004, "This behavior would not be acceptable in the home country of these soldiers. Why are these soldiers playing around with our children?" A Liberian woman went further to say, "These girls that [UN peacekeeping soldiers] go off with are just children. They cannot reason for themselves. They are hungry and want money for school. The peacekeepers give them that. But the peacekeepers are adults. They should act responsibly."</p> <p>In Haiti in February 2005, many Haitians told RI that they are not convinced that the UN takes the issue seriously. "The [civilian police] who patrol our neighborhood don't do anything. They are only interested in talking to women," said one woman who lived in Cité du Soleil, a vast urban slum in the center of Port-au-Prince. "These women are not prostitutes who talk to them but they are hungry. They will sell their bodies for money." In Petionville, the affluent suburb where most international personnel live, prostitutes haunt the streets every evening and hang out in many of the bars frequented by UN staff. A Haitian man told us, "The restaurants that attract you international people feed the prostitution business. The Haitian National Police will do nothing about this. They are even involved!"</p> <p>During RI's three assessment missions to Liberia, it was not unusual for the teams to see foreign men at tables in the crowded restaurants of Monrovia with young Liberian women. On Sundays the beaches are crowded with international civilians cavorting with</p>
<p>WWW.REFUGEESINTERNATIONAL.ORG</p>	<p>5</p>

**"This behavior would not be acceptable in the home country of these soldiers. Why are these soldiers playing around with our children?"**

<p>The “boys will be boys” attitude will continue to taint the debate until approaches... are changed to reflect the fact that sexual exploitation and abuse is a problem of misuse of power...</p>	<p>Liberian women. Gossip always runs rampant in small tight-knit communities like the expatriate community in Liberia and everyone knows which clubs have trafficked women from Morocco and Ukraine in them. Nightclubs are placed off limits by decrees from the SRSG and then new ones sprout up in private homes. The purveyors of trafficked women and sex workers always seem to be two steps ahead of the UN. In addition to the explosion of nightclubs and brothels in the capital, men meet with women in private houses to get around UN curfews and bans on establishments. “You don’t see the community in the bars in uniform like you did in DRC,” said a UN contractor in Monrovia, “But they [the peacekeepers with local women] are there—in the major hotels and in their own houses.” Assigning blame to the victims is also prevalent. According to a humanitarian worker interviewed by RI in Liberia, “Everyone here has to have a sugar daddy. You’re expected to give your girlfriend(s) money. Liberians have a different view of exploitation than we do.”</p> <p>Twenty U.S. dollars will buy one of these young women for the evening. According to Haitian women’s groups, women are even cheaper in the poorer areas of Port-au-Prince. “We’ve seen an increase in prostitution since MINUSTAH came. In 1994, we had a lot of problems with the Multinational Forces. The [peacekeepers] bring their bad habits with them to Haiti, but they do not bring change,” stated a representative of a Haitian woman’s group.</p> <p>The masculine culture of UN peacekeeping missions has produced a tolerance for extreme behaviors such as sexual exploitation and abuse. “What do you think is going to happen when you have thousands of men away from home?” is the common response to the media coverage of the MONUC scandal in the DRC. Solicitation of prostitutes by men in post-conflict countries is treated as commonplace and not deemed worthy of comment.</p> <p>When male peacekeepers were asked how they felt about the zero contact policy in Haiti, many of those whom RI interviewed laughed. A Brazilian peacekeeper told RI, “We are men. It is very difficult. But I am able to go across the border to the Dominican Republic on the weekends.” [This is presumably to solicit prostitutes legally, many of whom, ironically are Haitian women who have been trafficked to the other side of this island.]</p> <p>While this report is not the place for an analysis of the ability of men to control their sexual urges while serving in the military, the “boys will be boys” attitude will continue to taint the debate until approaches to sexual exploitation are changed to reflect the fact that sexual exploitation and abuse is a problem of misuse of power and infractions meriting disciplinary action rather than a matter of consensual sexual relations between equal partners.</p> <p>In traditionally male dominated environments, such as police departments, militaries, and fraternities, there is a tradition of the “wall of silence” or a bond that protects the members inside from accusations, whether true or not, from outside. “The general attitude of the military contingents in Bunia [in the DRC] has been one of trying to protect their national honor from any accusation of sexual misconduct,” states an internal UN report. “[MONUC personnel] expressed the view that the military was being discriminated against and unfairly targeted because they claimed that civilian staff were doing the same things and not getting the same level of scrutiny. International civilian staff were reluctant to report sexual misconduct by colleagues because they fear being stigmatized and punished as ‘whistle-blowers’, especially because prostitution including child prostitution and exploitation of Congolese women employees is so widespread.”<sup>17</sup></p> <p>The numbers of reported allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers is still quite low, even since the scandals</p> <p><i>“The forced resignation of Ruud Lubbers, former UN High Commissioner of Refugees is a welcome and hopeful positive change to this attitude. Lubbers was accused of sexual harassment by an employee and although charges were not pressed, many believe that this is what led to his eventual resignation.”</i></p>
<p>6</p>	<p>MUST BOYS BE BOYS? ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION &amp; ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS</p>

became public in DRC. The culture of solidarity and fear of recrimination, combined with the UN's failure to take sexual harassment claims by its own personnel seriously in the past, has had the effect of suppressing reporting of abuses within the UN system.\* "We cannot get them to report problems to us," complained a member of MINUSTAH. "They still see this as something that they can handle within their own teams—a culture of boys protecting boys. We have more support from New York now but it is a hard culture to crack."

In Liberia, UNMIL employees were reluctant to report suspicious behavior to the staff member, or "focal point," in charge of receiving complaints around sexual exploitation. "They do not see this as a major problem compared to some of the other things going wrong in this country," she said to RI in 2004. The gender advisor in Sierra Leone who was in charge of educating incoming personnel about sexual exploitation and abuse confirmed this. "They see this [sexual exploitation and abuse policy] as a UN thing—not anything that they truly buy into." In fact, the "zero contact" policy in Haiti has led to increased complaints of sexual harassment by UN female personnel, both local and international, claims one MINUSTAH employee. Combined with the reluctance of victims to lodge official reports, this wall of silence has hampered the UN's ability to investigate the allegations and fully understand the extent of the problem.

The Zeid report acknowledges the existence of the masculine culture of UN peacekeeping missions. "The presence of more women in a mission, especially at senior levels, will help to promote an environment that discourages sexual exploitation and abuse, particularly of the local population."<sup>18</sup> The problems with the low numbers of women have been well documented and member states bear the responsibility for putting forward more women for peacekeeping missions in both civilian and military positions. For many

countries, the low number of women in their police forces limits how many they can send to peacekeeping missions, but European and North American countries are not as restricted. Some African countries such as The Gambia (which contributed four female members to missions in Sierra Leone and Liberia) and Zambia have managed to find qualified female police officers to send on peacekeeping missions. However, the United States, where 10% of officers are women, was unable to send any women in the contingent of 77 civilian police (CIVPOL) initially sent to Liberia in 2004. The number of police officers has since been reduced even further to 35 civilian police, none of whom are women.\*

A senior CIVPOL official in Liberia told RI that CIVPOL's number one problem was "a very low percentage of females." He has communicated to DPKO that Liberia is underrepresented by women and wants more candidates. He told RI, "If CIVPOL is going to emulate the principles of progressive policing, we need more women police officers." For a country like Liberia, where more than 60% of the population has experienced gender-based violence, it is essential to have female police officers. Rape survivors suffer severe physical, emotional and social trauma, making it critical to have women peacekeeping officers, along with rape specialists, to create a comfortable atmosphere in which women can access treatment and council. In many cultures, women are forbidden to interact with males to whom they are not related, limiting access to treatment and care if women officers are not present. RI also found that the sexual exploitation scandals in DRC have created additional distrust among the local population towards male peacekeepers. Despite this stated need and very vocal public policies of the UN on systematically incorporating gender perspectives into its missions, the recruitment system for CIVPOL officers continues to neglect the specific targeting of women for recruitment.

\*The Department of State contracts out its hiring of CIVPOL officers to a private firm. In April of 2004, this company was Dyncorp. When questioned, Dyncorp claimed that one female officer was recruited but was unable to pass the psychological component of the training required to be deployed.

**“[UN peacekeepers] do not see this as a major problem compared to some of the other things going wrong in this country.”**

Recruiting more women into UN military forces and police is not a solution that can be readily implemented, given the small numbers of women in most militaries and the difficulties that women often face in taking UN positions abroad. RI interviewed female peacekeeping members in Liberia and Haiti about the low numbers of women in missions. "It is difficult for me to leave my husband and child," said one female Nigerian CIVPOL officer. "I am lucky because my family supports me and my husband is very progressive. He is also a

policeman and he knows that this work is important. However, it is difficult because I cannot afford to fly home to Nigeria to see them very often." Further, adding women personnel does not guarantee elimination of the conditions that allow sexual exploitation and abuse to flourish. Sexual exploitation and abuse are primarily problems of abuse of power and only secondarily problems of sexual behavior. It is more akin to corruption. One's sex does not determine whether one will abuse power relations.\*

*\*The Abu Ghraib prison abuses in Iraq involving female US Army soldiers demonstrate this misconception powerfully.*

*A former combatant in Liberia dreams of starting a new life after fourteen years of civil war.*

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## SOLUTIONS

### **Mainstreaming Gender in UN Peacekeeping Operations**

**In the absence of equal numbers of female personnel, an awareness of gender perspectives must be incorporated into all aspects of UN peacekeeping missions to ensure equity in programming and to address the masculine culture that has developed.**

At a UN meeting on peace operations in 2000, participants in Namibia declared that “in order to ensure the effectiveness of peace support operations, the principles of gender equality must permeate the entire [UN Peacekeeping] mission, at all levels, thus ensuring the participation of women and men as equal partners and beneficiaries in all aspects of the peace.”<sup>19</sup> On October 31, 2000, the UN Security Council noted the declaration and unanimously adopted Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security to mainstream a gender perspective into all of the actions of the United Nations.<sup>20</sup> Resolution 1325 can also be used as an important tool to combat the masculine culture within peacekeeping missions.

While Resolution 1325 was passed to ensure that gender dynamics were considered in all activities of UN peacekeeping missions, including the internal workings of the mission itself, the concept of mainstreaming gender has yet to truly take hold within them. As of September 2005, 10 of 17 UN peacekeeping operations had a dedicated full-time gender advisory position. The role of the Office of the Gender Advisor (OGA) is to promote, facilitate, support and monitor the incorporation of gender perspectives into peacekeeping operations.<sup>20</sup> By providing technical guidance to the heads of UN operations, the gender advisors are expected to mainstream a gender perspective into all functional areas of

peacekeeping and to increase the participation of women leaders and organizations in the implementation of the mandate of the operation.<sup>21</sup>

Implementation problems persist, however. As documented in previous reports, the UN has had difficulty filling key positions in a timely manner.<sup>22</sup> The delay in hiring has also negatively impacted the process of mainstreaming gender. Many gender advisors are not hired until well after many of the other positions in UN peacekeeping missions have been filled and key activities are underway. In the UN Mission in Liberia, UNMIL, the senior gender advisor who was charged with ensuring that the demobilization, disarmament, and reinsertion (DDR) process included female combatants did not begin work in Liberia until February 2004, three months after UNMIL’s first DDR attempt in December 2003.

One of the duties of the Office of Gender Advisor is to provide training on the concept of gender to all incoming personnel, including the 15,000 military troops who were being deployed in Liberia. The Office of the Gender Advisor was staffed by a UN volunteer at the time, who, while talented and hardworking, was too junior to have meaningful influence on the leaders of the mission. When the senior gender advisor was interviewed by Refugees International (RI), she told us that the budgeting process had been completed the week before she arrived. While she was confident she would have no problem raising funds to fulfill her duties, the Secretary-General in his 2002 report asked specifically that “the necessary financial and human resources for gender mainstreaming be a part of mission budgets.”<sup>23</sup> Obviously, this has yet to be implemented.

In Haiti, the gender advisor was a member of the peacekeeping assessment team and

**Many gender advisors are not hired until well after many of the other positions in UN peacekeeping missions have been filled and key activities are underway.**

<sup>19</sup> Gender mainstreaming is the process of systematically incorporating gender perspectives into all areas of work and assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programs. Simply put, mainstreaming a gender perspective means realizing that policies and programs may impact men and women differently. No one department of an organization should be responsible for this incorporation of gender into programs but this perspective must be infused throughout the organization so that men and women benefit equally. The Office of the Gender Advisor is mandated with assisting in this mainstreaming.

<p style="text-align: center;"> <b>“For some [peacekeepers], gender is an emotionally loaded term closely allied, perhaps, to the terms ‘feminist’ or ‘feminism.’”</b> </p>	<p> was therefore able to deploy earlier. This was useful as she was able to be involved in early discussions on structuring the mission and to ensure gender was factored into decision-making. However, at the time of RI’s mission to Haiti in February 2005, she was handicapped by a lack of budget and staff. She had but one person (out of a future team of six) to help her conduct all the induction trainings. Furthermore, in addition to her duties as the gender advisor, she was also appointed as a “Focal Point for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse” while the mission tried to fill the position of the Code of Conduct officer.* </p> <p> The position of gender advisor in UN peacekeeping missions is still quite new and has an ever changing mandate. Gender advisors interpret this mandate differently based on their personal expertise, the particular context that they are working in, and the support of their bosses, the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs). RI attended a meeting of gender advisors from UN peacekeeping missions in West Africa held at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in December 2004, and found that the gender advisors had very different interpretations as to how much they should be involved in the problems of sexual exploitation and abuse. While the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) had a gender advisor who actively worked on sexual exploitation and abuse issues by necessity, the gender advisors of MONUC and UNMIL adamantly insisted that this should not be in their purview. “We are suffering from ‘mission creep,’” one gender advisor said, “We have to play the role of different UN agencies like UNIFEM when they are absent from a country. This focus on sexual exploitation and abuse within the mission is making </p> <p> us lose the bigger picture of pushing for women’s rights in the whole country.” </p> <p> To its credit, the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has actively addressed the issue of mainstreaming gender into peacekeeping missions and has supported the work of the gender advisors actively. In addition to recruiting and hiring gender advisors for 10 of 17 peacekeeping operations, DPKO has produced gender training materials and hired a permanent gender advisor to assist them with interpreting their mandate and to advocate for gender issues within DPKO.<sup>24</sup> This position is also relatively new. However, it is telling that all the senior gender advisors in UN peacekeeping missions are women, further associating the term “gender” with women’s issues in the minds of UN peacekeepers.<sup>†</sup> This conundrum is acknowledged by the gender departments in the field. The senior gender advisors have hired male staff members in the MONUC and MINUSTAH missions. “We would like to have more males in this office,” said a gender advisor, but no one qualified ever applies.” </p> <p> According to a recent study, “For some [peacekeepers], gender is an emotionally loaded term closely allied, perhaps, to the terms ‘feminist’ or ‘feminism’. Use of the word evoked a defensive stance from [UN peacekeepers].”<sup>25</sup> Thus, placing the responsibility for addressing the sexual exploitation and abuse issue with the gender advisor will not enhance the overall implementation of the Code of Conduct and mandated policies for the mission. </p> <p> In Haiti, as noted above, the gender advisor was also serving as the “Focal Point on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse” during RI’s </p> <p> <small> *The Code of Conduct officer is a new position that was created by the UN Peacekeeping mission in Burundi to deal directly with violations of the UN’s code of conduct. It is unclear whether this position will be replaced by the new Conduct and Discipline Units that were created in August 2005. †The term “gender” is often misunderstood and used as a substitute for “women’s issues” in many UN missions that RI has visited. More often than not, managers send women to attend meetings about “gender issues”. At the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Center’s meeting on Gender and Peacekeeping in West Africa in December 2004, the meeting planners targeted the SRSGs, force commanders, and other high level males in order to grapple with the concept of gender in peacekeeping missions. However, the participants ended up being almost all female. In fact, a female military observer was sent in place of the gender focal point for the peacekeeping troops in UNMIL (a male) even though she stated that she did not work on gender issues and should not be at the meeting. This oversight did not prevent her from positive contribution to the meeting. Additionally compounding the problem is the fact that the term “gender” does not translate readily into some languages. Gender advocates working in Middle Eastern countries have noted that there is no Arabic word for gender. </small> </p>
<p>10</p>	<p>MUST BOYS BE BOYS? ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION &amp; ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS</p>



*The UN Mission in Sierra Leone encouraged more women to join in Sierra Leone's police and military. This Sierra Leonean police woman is being trained in electrical wiring by Pakistani peacekeepers.*

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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Lack of adequate resources for training, prevention activities and investigation has hampered past efforts to fight sexual exploitation and abuse...</b></p>	<p>mission and was expected to assume the tasks of the Code of Conduct officer while the mission waited to finish hiring for the position.<sup>26</sup> In February 2005, while the UN faced media scrutiny on the scandal in MONUC, she was charged with training all incoming MINUSTAH staff on the Codes of Conduct with only one staff member to assist her. “I would like to begin a Training of Trainer program within the military and police side,” she explained. “The police and military rotate every six months. But I just don’t have the staff to be able to do all of this as well as I would like.” In Liberia, the gender advisor who had a slightly larger staff at the time was appointed to be the alternate sexual exploitation focal point.</p> <p>Aside from the resource issues involved with having one person work on mainstreaming gender throughout the mission and address sexual exploitation, combining the two positions limits the effectiveness of both. Sexual exploitation is not strictly a gender issue but is a disciplinary offense akin to stealing or assault. Sexual exploitation is also a form of corruption. This corruption poisons the peacekeeping mission and prevents it from executing its mandate. While the gender advisor is well suited to do training, having her act as the person who investigates abuses does not reinforce the idea that it is a <i>serious disciplinary offense</i>. The Zeid Report applauded the development of the position of “Code of Conduct” officers in UN peacekeeping missions. In August 2005, the UN announced that eight of the United Nations’ peacekeeping operations would be immediately establishing Conduct and Discipline Units that would be staffed by senior-level experts on personnel conduct issues and would replace mission focal points on sexual exploitation and abuse.<sup>27</sup> While the establishment of the new units is a positive step forward, RI remains skeptical that the new units will be deployed in a timely fashion or that they will be able to overcome many of the same obstacles that the Code of Conduct Officers and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Focal Points have faced. Lack of adequate resources for training, prevention activities, and investigation has hampered past efforts to fight sexual exploitation and abuse and must be addressed to make these units effective.</p> <p><b>Refugees International therefore recommends that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DPKO move to hire more male gender advisors to counter-balance the idea that gender issues can only be addressed by women;</li> <li>• Donors and others interested in effective peacekeeping and UN reform continue to advocate for increased attention to mainstreaming of gender principles within all UN bodies;</li> <li>• UN peacekeeping missions separate the positions of gender advisor and Sexual Exploitation Focal Point or personnel involved in conduct and discipline units. If this is not possible, adequate resources, both financial and human, must be allocated to the position;</li> <li>• Member states provide more human resources within DPKO Headquarters for gender mainstreaming;</li> <li>• Member states actively put forward the names of qualified female candidates for senior management positions;</li> <li>• The UN Security Council encourage more female representation in troop-contributing countries;</li> <li>• Troop-contributing countries examine their policies for recruiting women in the military and police forces and sending them to peacekeeping missions and send numbers of females proportionate with the national average of women in their security forces;</li> <li>• US Department of State insist that the contractors it uses to recruit for civilian police officers provide women for UN peacekeeping missions and, if they fail to do so, discontinue their contracts;</li> </ul>
<p>12</p>	<p>MUST BOYS BE BOYS? ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION &amp; ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UN deploy key personnel such as code of conduct officers, Senior Gender advisors and investigators of Sexual Exploitation and abuse in the early stages of peacekeeping missions.</li> </ul> <p><b>Changing Attitudes of Senior Management in UN Peacekeeping Missions</b></p> <p><b>Senior managers must send an unequivocal statement to their staff that they will not tolerate sexual exploitation and abuse by ensuring that their actions reflect their statements.</b></p> <p>Refugees International (RI) noticed a marked difference between the attitudes of UN personnel serving in Haiti and in Liberia towards sexual exploitation and abuse, largely due to the attitudes of senior management in UN peacekeeping missions. Their behavior and activities often influence the culture of the organization and the ability of the organization to effectively address problems.</p> <p>In Liberia, former SRSG Jacques Paul Klein spoke forcefully publicly about the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse, but his actions appeared to contradict his words. UNMIL was very slow to put the proper mechanisms in place to report, investigate, and prevent sexual exploitation and abuse. One telling example was Klein’s handling of the issue of trafficking of women in Liberia.</p> <p>Prior to serving as the SRSG for the UN Mission in Liberia, Klein served as the head of the UN peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina (UNMIBH) where he was criticized for his handling of the problem of UN peacekeepers and trafficking of women and overlooking the role of UN personnel in it. One of the programs initiated in UNMIBH was called The Special Trafficking Operations Programme or STOP. This program was notorious for conducting media-laden high-profile raids of brothels that were frequented by UN peacekeepers in Bosnia. While STOP initially drew support because it drew attention to the issue of trafficking, the program</p> <p>eventually ended up driving trafficking underground making it more difficult to stop. Women’s groups were highly critical of the media driven approach which did not take into account the safety and protection of victims of trafficking. Against the protests of many women’s organizations who worked on the issue of trafficking in the UN peacekeeping mission in Bosnia, Klein appointed a former reporter with no experience as his focal point on trafficking of women and sexual exploitation and abuse in Bosnia. While those who have worked with her agree that she cares passionately about trafficking and trafficking victims she lacks formal training in the complex criminal investigations that human trafficking requires. She was criticized roundly in Bosnia for exacerbating the problem of trafficking and overlooking the role of the UN in it. “She led the STOP raids on brothels in Bosnia with cameras in tow,” stated one expert on trafficking, “The women were terrified. Sometimes the police officers who were involved in the raids were the very clients of the brothel.”</p> <p>The Zeid Report addresses this problem specifically, urging the UN to “have access to professionals who have experience in investigating sex crimes.” It warns that “complex and sensitive investigations into allegations not be undertaken by ‘enthusiastic amateurs.’” Yet, RI found that some of the same problems that plagued the mission in Bosnia were occurring again in Liberia. Rather than listening to and learning from the criticism, Klein side-stepped DPKO and appointed the same woman to head up his trafficking unit in Liberia.<sup>28</sup> When this came to light, Klein defended his colleague’s work against the protests of different UN agencies and NGOs working in Liberia and in Bosnia. When RI visited Liberia in December 2004, UNMIL personnel told us that, as in Bosnia, the brothels had gone underground. “The women are still there but thanks to the aggressive actions taken by UNMIL, it’s a lot harder to find them now.” Again, rather than responding to this problem and removing her from the position, Klein then appointed</p>	<p><b>[Senior management’s] behavior and activities often influence the culture of the organization and the ability to effectively address problems.</b></p>
<p>WWW.REFUGEESINTERNATIONAL.ORG</p>	<p>13</p>

*Chilean peacekeepers in Haiti are not allowed to bring civilian attire to the field, as evident in the beach attire of a supervised “rest and relaxation” break on a Haitian beach.*

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her to be the focal point for sexual exploitation and abuse allegations.

While Klein said he was aggressively addressing sexual exploitation and abuse, he also complained vociferously that he has no ability to punish perpetrators except to repatriate those found in violation. He is right. However,

there were other actions that could have been taken to show he took the problem seriously. Advocates for the victims complain that they never heard about the results of any investigations that were reported directly to the SRSB. The lack of concern for reporting back to the local population was echoed by his employees. “There is no accountability

<p>in this mission,” one UNMIL employee said to RI. “The SRSG sweeps it all under the carpet. No one will talk about this openly.” A member of an international NGO who works closely with women’s groups in Liberia also complained to RI, “They just don’t take [sexual exploitation] very seriously. I’ve had UNMIL people tell me that some prostitution is not exploitative and that the Liberian women choose to be prostitutes. This attitude is unacceptable.”</p> <p>In general, UNMIL employees did not evidence the same knowledge about the consequences of sexual exploitation and abuse as MINUSTAH employees did. In March 2004, RI reported that UNMIL lacked a clear and transparent process for reporting sexual exploitation incidents.<sup>29</sup> RI interviewed representatives of local NGOs and women’s groups, international NGOs, and other UN agencies, as well as many different members of UNMIL’s staff. At that time there was no individual formally assigned to be the sexual exploitation focal point. No two people that RI interviewed could identify the correct focal person to report allegations or cases of sexual exploitation. There was also confusion between the United Nations Development Program and UNMIL Human Rights officers about who had the lead on this issue. “There is no formal process for addressing problems with UNMIL. All violations should be reported to the Human Rights section of UNMIL,” a UN Development Program (UNDP) official told RI. At a separate meeting, an UNMIL official said, “I am not the focal point for [these] complaints. That’s [UNDP].”</p> <p>While this situation had improved in December 2004 when RI re-visited Liberia, many of the people that RI interviewed were still unclear about how to report violations. Now that SRSG Klein has left UNMIL and a new SRSG, Alan Doss, has been appointed, the UN has the opportunity to address the problem of trafficking of women and bring an end to sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers and UN staff in Liberia.</p> <p>In Haiti, while there were reports of peacekeepers soliciting prostitutes and of MINUSTAH staff frequenting restaurants and bars where prostitutes hung out, there was a marked difference in attitude towards the issue. While this may be due to the increased media scrutiny and the relative sophistication of the Haitian civil society and media in contrast to the Liberian media, the attitudes of the senior management of the mission were markedly different. Every senior manager that RI interviewed spoke positively of the work of the gender advisor/sexual exploitation focal point and acknowledged the difficult task in front of her. “I am very concerned about sexual exploitation,” stated a high level military commander, “We cannot do our jobs if the population does not trust us.” “The concept that sexual exploitation is wrong needs to be drummed into people. It has to be reinforced all the time,” added a senior police official. “Everyone needs to know that there is zero tolerance for this in this mission.” Almost every person that RI interviewed could explain what would happen to them if they were accused of sexual exploitation and abuse. RI talked with peacekeepers who told us, “I would not have sex with a woman in Haiti. It is not allowed.”</p> <p>Like other missions, MINUSTAH faces obstacles to punishing perpetrators. The most severe sanction is repatriation of the perpetrator to his home country. The Zeid Report has urged that suspension of pay be used as a punishment to ensure individual disciplinary accountability. RI’s findings in Haiti reinforce the significance of this recommendation. One CIVPOL officer interviewed by RI said, “I know that I would be sent back in disgrace. My country is counting on me, my family is counting on me, and frankly I need the extra money that the UN is paying me.”</p> <p>The difference in attitude towards sexual exploitation in Haiti is not enough to eliminate the problem. While we were in Haiti, two Pakistani peacekeepers were charged with paying a Haitian woman to have sex with them. While local media reports</p>	<p><b>“I know that I would be sent back in disgrace. My country is counting on me, my family is counting on me, and frankly I need the extra money that the UN is paying me.”</b></p>
<p>WWW.REFUGEESINTERNATIONAL.ORG</p>	<p>15</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Until there is a better understanding of why the UN is opposed to peace-keeper involvement with prostitutes or local women, peacekeepers will continue to think of it as a rule that makes no sense.</b></p>	<p>claimed that she was raped, the investigation showed that she may have unwittingly entered into an agreement to have sex that was brokered by an older Haitian woman. Most troubling about this case was that it was presented at a UN press conference as “only a case of prostitution” and not a case of rape. While the distinction is large—rape is a felony crime and solicitation of prostitution is a misdemeanor—MINUSTAH has specifically forbidden all of its members to engage in sex with prostitutes. SRSJ Juan Gabriel Valdez has issued frequent bulletins with this message to UN personnel. Almost every MINUSTAH member from the commander of the CIVPOL to enlisted men in the Brazilian army were able to tell RI that prostitution was illegal and that they were likely to be sent home if found consorting with a prostitute.</p> <p>Nonetheless, expecting full compliance with the zero tolerance/zero contact policy in Haiti is unrealistic. Until there is a better understanding of why the UN is so opposed to peacekeeper involvement with prostitutes or local women, peacekeepers will continue to think of it as a rule that makes no sense. Fear of punishment is not enough to ensure compliance. While military peacekeepers are kept in walled compounds, they are still pursued by local women. “Women bang on the gate all night,” said a member of the Peruvian contingent. The Chileans had been frightened away from the local women by dire threats of HIV and sexually transmitted infections. “Our men are so afraid, they won’t even take the condoms that the UN passes out,” claimed a Chilean officer in Cap Haitien. The Chilean troops are taken under supervision for visits to local beaches and none of the military peacekeepers are allowed to bring civilian clothes with them to Haiti, ensuring that they are always in uniform. These measures, however, do not address the fundamental problem of exploitative behavior by peacekeepers while in post-conflict countries.</p> <p><b>Refugees International therefore recommends that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The UN make measures to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse part of the performance goals for all managers and commanders and rate managerial performance in accordance with the actual implementation of these goals;</li> <li>• An independent watchdog organization be set up by humanitarian agencies and donors to monitor actual implementation of UN policies in the field;</li> <li>• Any SRSJ or senior UN employee who fails to implement measures to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse be removed from his or her position.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Focusing on Civilian Personnel</i></b></p> <p><b>The focus on problems of sexual exploitation and abuse by military factions of UN peace-keeping missions has made it easy to overlook the abuse by civilian personnel. Abuse by civilian personnel must also be investigated and addressed.</b></p> <p>According to the Zeid Report, in recent investigations of sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peacekeeping missions worldwide, DPKO received 25 allegations against civilians and civilian police as compared to 80 against military personnel.<sup>30</sup> While the numbers imply that there is a larger problem with military personnel, the reality may be different. UN military personnel are readily recognized as they are usually in uniform, while civilians are more difficult to identify.</p> <p>In the nightclubs of Monrovia, civilian personnel socialize with Liberian members of their organizations and with Liberian friends. It is impossible for an outsider to determine if the young well-dressed Liberian woman at the table of 16 expatriate men is a friend or an exploited woman. According to the Zeid Report, the majority of the sexual exploitation and abuse came in the form of “sex for food” with some</p>
<p>16</p>	<p>MUST BOYS BE BOYS? ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION &amp; ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS</p>

<p>being “rape disguised as prostitution.” But the majority of the complaints heard in the field are of expatriate men, both UN employees and others, carrying on inappropriate relationships with local women. This problem was particularly on display in Liberia. “There is a man who lives next door to me,” said one UN employee. “He has a different young girl over at his house every day. But I cannot prove that he does not treat them well or that he is having sex with them. It is only speculation. How can you investigate speculation?”</p> <p>Expatriates in Liberia complain about the particularly aggressive prostitutes that target UN employees. Members of international humanitarian agencies in Liberia were concerned about the proliferation of Liberian women hanging around UNMIL checkpoints and tried to bring up their concerns with UNMIL. “They want us to give them a name, to tell them who to pursue. But this is not my job. I don’t work for UNMIL and I’m not an investigator,” said one agency. This sentiment was echoed by both of the Sexual Exploitation Focal Points in UNMIL. “It’s hard for me to follow up on the information I receive. How am I supposed to react to a report that says, ‘I saw a Bangladeshi man at the beach taking pictures of little girls?’” The Zeid report specifically addresses this problem saying, “Managers must realize that non-specific allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse cannot be ignored. Such allegations may be an early warning of real abuse.”<sup>31</sup> This is particularly the case with civilian personnel as, generally, RI found that the bulk of the complaints in Monrovia and Petionville were about civilian personnel.</p> <p>In reality, it is easier to discipline military personnel in peacekeeping missions than civilians. While there are clearly defined chains of command in the military, the multiplicity of civilian agencies and personnel in these missions makes investigating and punishing them difficult. “The problem</p> <p>with civilians is you don’t have that same kind of command structure over them,” said a member of DPKO. “That’s where the most difficult work is going to be.” Political officers, public affairs workers, administrators and other civilians are not subject to such discipline. UN officials are still searching for more effective ways of enforcing a stated “zero-tolerance” policy. The Zeid report addresses this issue by recommending that the General Assembly amend the Staff Regulations to specifically provide that acts of sexual exploitation and abuse constitute serious misconduct. Additionally, it recommends that appointments of civilian police or military observers and contracts for any other civilian personnel (such as UN Volunteers or the many private security firm contractors who provide military observers and civilian police) be terminated if they are guilty of sexual exploitation and abuse.</p> <p>At present, training in gender issues and prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse is neither standardized nor compulsory for civilian personnel. It is essential that such training become mandatory. In addition, the Secretary-General must not hesitate to waive immunity for any civilian who is determined to have violated staff regulations about sexual exploitation and abuse.</p> <p><b>Refugees International therefore recommends that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Secretary-General appoint a group of experts to review UN personnel rules and recommend ways to ensure that loopholes that allow civilian personnel to avoid prosecution be tightened;</li> <li>• The UN amend Staff Regulations to specifically provide that acts of sexual exploitation and abuse constitute serious misconduct.</li> </ul>	<p>“It’s hard for me to follow up on the information I receive. How am I supposed to react to a report that says, ‘I saw a Bangladeshi man at the beach taking pictures of little girls?’”</p>
<p>WWW.REFUGEEINTERNATIONAL.ORG</p>	<p>17</p>

### ***Training Peacekeeping Troops***

**Training of UN peacekeeping troops must go beyond the initial training they receive when they enter the UN peacekeeping mission. To ensure that the troops understand the concepts of sexual exploitation and abuse, training must take into consideration their own cultural and linguistic norms.**

One of the most common suggestions for addressing sexual exploitation and abuse and mainstreaming gender within peacekeeping missions is providing training to the troops. Just as success in battle is dependent on leadership, training and discipline, these elements, particularly pre- and post-deployment training, are also critical to reducing or eliminating some of the problems associated with troop deployments. According to the UN training documents, “Peacekeepers represent the UN and are present in the mission area to help recovery from the trauma of conflict. As a result, they must consciously be prepared to accept social constraints in their public and private lives in order to do the work and to pursue the ideals of the UN.”<sup>33</sup> In countries with large numbers of traumatized civilians—including trauma from gender-based violence and other atrocities—the willingness of peace-

keepers to “accept social constraints” is particularly important. The civilian and military chains of command must demonstrate, by their own conduct and by their aggressive enforcement of policies, that actions contrary to good order and discipline will not be tolerated and that people will be held accountable.

When peacekeepers are deployed to an area of conflict, it is expected that peacekeepers in these countries will have a positive impact, as they have been sent to preserve peace and protect civilians. Military troop contingents are trained by professionals in military subjects such as tactics, rules of engagement and marksmanship. However, peacekeeping troops arrive in country with different levels of readiness. Training on UN universal mandates such as mainstreaming gender and enforcement of human rights should be mandatory and should be approached with the same seriousness that other military training is given. While training for peacekeeping troops should focus on conditions and behaviors appropriate to the theater of operations, it should begin in the troop-contributing country. Refugees International interviewed UN staff in Liberia who said, “Peacekeepers bring their attitude with them

*Peruvian peacekeepers practice aerial maneuvers in Jacmal, Haiti.*

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Peter Gantz



<p>from their home countries when they come here and will bring new attitudes back home with them.”</p> <p>Each contributing country has its own culture and mores, its own attitudes toward alcohol, women, sex and its own thoughts about what constitutes “proper behavior.” For example, Pakistani peacekeepers bought bras to cover Sierra Leonean women’s breasts in the areas around where they were deployed because they were shocked to see them working bare-breasted and felt it was not proper.<sup>33</sup> While the deployment of troops from similar cultures within the region may be one solution, this may also compromise neutrality in the case of regional conflicts such as in West Africa.</p> <p>According to the trainers that RI spoke to in West Africa, there is very little pre-deployment training on non-technical issues, such as preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. A UN official in charge of providing training for new peacekeepers in Sierra Leone said, “These ideas are new to them. They see these concepts as a UN thing and foreign to their own experience. It is something that they have to do while in the employ of the UN but they do not see it as relevant to their own cultures.” UNAMSIL tried sending a trainer to donor countries to train soldiers but this practice was discontinued. Although DPKO has insisted that if the missions want to send trainers to troop contributing countries for this purpose, they will be supported, this is not a sustainable plan. As discussed above, those charged with sensitizing the staff in these peacekeeping missions are already short-handed and over-extended. To combat the problem in MONUC, the UN has begun sending trainers to the countries of troops that will be deployed in DRC, but they are not doing this for all of the other peacekeeping missions.</p> <p>While there have been some advances in military training to include gender concepts, codes of conduct, legal issues, interactions with the community, and sexual exploita-</p>	<p>tion and abuse, these advances have not completely reached militaries who contribute troops to UN peacekeeping missions. A worthy example to follow is that of the Centro Conjunto Para Operaciones de Paz de Chile (CECOPAC), the Chilean peacekeeping training institute that uses the UN Standardized Training Modules and conducts gender awareness training. Regional peacekeeping institutes such as the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (KAIPTC) in Ghana and the Argentine Joint Peacekeeping Operation Training Center (CAECOPAZ) should also incorporate UN curriculum on gender mainstreaming and donors should expand their use in order to support troop-contributing countries. The African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, a U.S. partnership with African militaries that strengthens peacekeeping and peace enforcement, should also strive to include UN guidelines on sexual exploitation and abuse in its curricula, as well as mainstreaming gender throughout its programs.</p> <p>If troop-contributing countries are serious about combating these problems in their militaries, they should work more closely with women’s groups from their own country to incorporate culturally appropriate curricula into their military training programs. “Guidelines from a national army are stronger and more effective than UN guidelines,” acknowledged a member of the Ghanaian army who had previously served as a peacekeeper. Troops from cultures quite different from the countries in which they are deployed must also interact with local women’s groups to ensure that there are no misunderstandings about behavior.</p> <p>All UN personnel, whether civilian or military, go through an induction training upon arrival in country that familiarizes them with UN operating procedures. While this training covers the issues of sexual exploitation and the UN’s approach to gender, it’s unclear whether or not it is effective. This training covers everything</p>
<p>WWW.REFUGEESINTERNATIONAL.ORG</p>	<p><b>If troop-contributing countries are serious about combating these problems in their militaries, they should work more closely with women’s groups from their own country...</b></p> <p>19</p>

<p><b>“It’s one thing to have a code of conduct. It’s another to have someone sit down and talk you through it—regularly.”</b></p>	<p>from the codes of conduct to human resources issues. According to one UNMIL employee, “It’s too intensive. You get bombarded with information and it happens right after you’ve been traveling. It’s hard to remember anything that came out of it.”</p> <p>Additionally, depending on the mission, many of the troops do not necessarily attend the same training. Language acts as a barrier within missions as usually only the commanding officers speak the “mission language” of English or French. Most of the troops speak only their native tongue. So, it is up to the commanding officers to ensure that the induction training is carried out. In order to facilitate training of troops, DPKO has published standardized training modules, to provide guidelines on all aspects identified as “basic universal training requirements” for United Nations peacekeepers, including one on gender.<sup>34</sup> But it often depends upon the different contingent commanders whether the material is translated into their own language and what amount of training is provided to the troops. It is also unclear whether training is repeated and reinforced throughout the period of their deployment and what, if any, assessments have been done to see what impact these trainings have.</p> <p>The UN has expectations of its staff that are spelled out in the UN Codes of Conduct (see Annex). Written and clear codes of conduct are a necessary starting point for defining expected behavior. But they are not an end in themselves. According to one UN employee, “Rules must be clear. You have to ask how sensitized employees are. It’s one thing to have a code of conduct. It’s another to have someone sit down and talk you through it—regularly. You need a clear structure on how to handle complaints and a system that ensures accountability.”</p> <p>When RI asked military and civilian leaders in Liberia about troop conduct, they all pointed out that troops were issued cards printed with the UN Code of Conduct, which they</p> <p>carried with them at all times. But when RI asked those leaders and troops to see their cards, not a single person could produce one. Further, even if a card were being carried, it doesn’t mean the person really understands what is expected. UN staff, NGO staff, and the local population themselves were uncertain about what constituted code of conduct violations, how to report them, and if perpetrators were ever punished.</p> <p><b>Refugees International therefore recommends that:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training on UN universal mandates such as gender mainstreaming and enforcement of human rights should be mandatory for civilian and military personnel;</li> <li>• DPKO must ensure that training on gender concepts and human rights is carried out by bona fide trainers with expertise on the subject matter;</li> <li>• Donors fund regional peacekeeping training centers to mainstream gender into all their trainings and provide training on sexual exploitation and abuse prevention for troop-contributing countries;</li> <li>• DPKO should conduct an evaluation to determine what messages resonate with peacekeepers and the effectiveness of their trainings;</li> <li>• Militaries from troop-contributing countries actively work with local women’s groups in their own countries to design culturally appropriate responses to mainstreaming gender and combating and combating sexual exploitation and abuse;</li> <li>• Country commanders train their troops using country-specific training modules and verify completion of training in writing to the Force Commander;</li> <li>• Military commanders and civilian personnel supervisors follow up and continually emphasize training on sexual exploitation and abuse.</li> </ul>
<p>20</p>	<p>MUST BOYS BE BOYS? ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION &amp; ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS</p>

<p><b>Improving Access to the UN Complaint System</b></p> <p><b>To build trust in local communities so that community members feel confident enough to lodge complaints, the UN complaint system must be transparent, easy to access, and accountable to the local population.</b></p> <p>UN procedures for investigating a case against military personnel are different from those for investigating a case against civilians. Service providers for victims of rape and sexual exploitation in Liberia and Haiti are concerned because the procedures are ambiguous to them. As a US government representative told us, “We know bad stuff is happening, but it is hard to find out who is responsible.... If we get credible information, we’ll get complaints into the proper channels. But it’s not always clear to us how to do that.” The UN is dealing with this by appointing sexual abuse focal points and code of conduct officers. As discussed above, these positions are often filled well after the start of the peacekeeping missions. In addition, they are often unfilled for months on end. While DPKO requested that UNMIL appoint a focal point on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in April 2004, it wasn’t filled officially until much later. In MINUSTAH, as of April 1, 2005, there was still no Code of Conduct officer, even though the mission was deployed in June 2004.</p> <p>Information on how to report an abuse and what will happen to the perpetrator must be clear to everyone within the missions, their colleagues in NGOs and, most importantly, the local community. Part of the difficulty that the UN has faced in investigating allegations is that the women or girls involved refuse to give evidence against the peace. Extreme sexual violence has been an integral part of the war in the countries in which the peacekeepers are stationed. In these countries, the women are often terrified of all military, foreign and local, making any formal investigation extremely difficult.</p> <p>Victims are often pressured by their families to keep quiet, a serious obstacle to reporting. Violators sometimes remain unpunished due to lack of hard evidence. It is difficult to investigate allegations while maintaining the victim’s right to privacy and an employee’s right to due process. Investigators in Liberia pointed out, “If we don’t have hard evidence, we cannot accuse someone. People do not want to come forward with names.” Likewise, service providers complain about the investigation procedures. “UNMIL appears to be going overboard on any accusation of rape, but to protect their employees. No one takes the victims seriously. There is no understanding at all about protection of the victims.”</p> <p>The Zeid Report states that in the case of MONUC many of the victims were “frightened, poorly educated women and children who had difficulty identifying their foreign assailants.” It recommends that the use of “enthusiastic amateurs” be suspended and that professionals who have experience in investigating sex crimes must be involved. It further suggests that “where positive identification of those accused cannot be achieved through traditional methods, the mechanism must have access to modern techniques of forensic identification.”<sup>35</sup> While this is admirable, it is unlikely that the countries in which these violations take place will have access to such equipment and procedures. It is essential that donors support this bold recommendation by the Zeid report and begin to modernize forensic collection in developing countries to effectively prosecute violators.</p> <p>While DPKO has begun to distribute materials to publicize the problems of trafficking and exploitation, neither mission in Haiti nor Liberia have public information officers or programs designed to specifically target local women to explain to them their rights and how to report a crime. One expert on trafficking pointed out that while donors funded DPKO to produce posters targeted towards the peacekeepers, there was no mechanism to evaluate what messages resonate with peacekeepers or to determine</p>	<p><b>It is difficult to investigate allegations while maintaining the victim’s right to privacy and an employee’s right to due process.</b></p>
<p>WWW.REFUGEESINTERNATIONAL.ORG</p>	<p>21</p>

<p><b>Not only are we unsure if [peacekeepers who are guilty of violations] are punished, we suspect that they are sometimes just rotated to another mission.”</b></p>	<p>how effective this campaign was. “There must be programs that you can implement, not just posters and catchphrases. In order to effectively implement a program, one usually does research beforehand, designs a program based on the data collected and then measures the impacts and modifies the program. I don’t see any evidence that the UN is planning on doing this.”</p> <p>The Zeid Report calls for outreach to the local community. This is essential because crimes regarding sex are the most under-reported crimes in every culture. For countries like Liberia and Haiti, where discussion about rape is taboo and where there are no effective police departments that could or would investigate these abuses, it is very unlikely that victims will report without assistance and assurance that they will be protected. Every person in the reporting chain—the person who gets the initial call, the police, the investigators, the officers—must understand and practice gender sensitivity. For complicated issues such as sexual exploitation and abuse, where the victims are not always certain that it is their right to complain, it can be almost impossible. The problem of sexual exploitation and abuse is not something that should be addressed only by international organizations. Local women’s organizations must be included and supported in educating women on their rights and how to protect themselves.</p> <p>In addition, the UN’s policy of silence around these issues has allowed the local media, which sometimes rely on gossip and unproven facts, to control the dialogue within the local communities on the extent of sexual exploitation and abuse. In Haiti, for instance, MINUSTAH has been able to respond fairly rapidly to allegations of sexual misconduct. Some of the cases were unfounded and the suspect was cleared of any wrongdoing. By clearly and transparently communicating with the local population, MINUSTAH was able to also discourage false reporting.</p> <p>While there are radio programs that occasionally address gender-based violence or women’s issues at UN public information radio stations, there is no evidence that the UN peacekeeping missions actively try to work with local women’s organizations in a formal manner. Populations are not surveyed to see what message resonates with women and there are no measurements of the effectiveness of public information campaigns as there are with other behavior change campaigns targeted to developing country populations. “We’re happy to put anything on the air,” said a public information officer in Liberia, “We just need someone to develop the programs.”</p> <p>“The UN wants to fix these problems but they do it on the cheap. They claim that they don’t have money and modify programs that may or may not have been successful in one country for another with very little interaction with local civil society or women’s groups,” one peacekeeping expert told Refugees International.</p> <p>There must also be a feedback mechanism that informs the victims of the outcome of the investigation and the judicial process, if any. Peacekeeping troops report to the military command of their own countries. If someone is found guilty, that person is sent back to his country for discipline. The United Nations is attempting to ensure that peacekeepers found guilty of discipline infractions are prohibited from serving in future missions. However, it has been difficult for outside organizations to track what, if any, punishment occurs when the violator is repatriated. “This is particularly a problem with civilian personnel, many of whom are not actually employees of the United Nations but are contractors,” a peacekeeping researcher told RI. “Not only are we unsure if they are punished, we suspect that they are sometimes just rotated to another mission.” Accordingly, it is very difficult, if not impossible, for victims and their families to determine what, if any, actions have been taken. In order to trust the UN enough to</p>
<p>22</p>	<p>MUST BOYS BE BOYS? ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION &amp; ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS</p>

begin reporting violations, victims must know they will be protected and treated with respect when they report and that the UN will take action against the perpetrators.

The Zeid Report makes far reaching recommendations regarding accountability. These include financial reparations for victims of abuse by garnishing peacekeeper's wages and DNA testing to prove paternity that will be used to make peacekeepers provide child support to the children they father while on mission. In particular, the recommendations

for on-site courts martial are crucial. The local community must be involved in the process and see the results to increase their trust in the rule of law.

**Refugees International therefore recommends that:**

- Public Information directors for UN peacekeeping missions design programs along with local women's groups to inform and educate the local population regarding sexual exploitation and abuse;



*A displaced Liberian woman and her daughter in Monrovia.*

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Deborah Terry

<p style="text-align: center;">In Refugees International's many missions to post-conflict countries, women refugees, IDPs, and survivors of gender-based violence have overwhelmingly asked for ...support to start businesses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Information programs in UN Peacekeeping missions communicate the findings of investigations into sexual exploitation and abuse;</li> <li>• The UN actively move to protect “whistle-blowers” by strengthening confidentiality rules;</li> <li>• The UN install a person focused on coordinating actions towards trafficking in all UN peacekeeping missions.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Empowering Women in the Local Communities</i></b></p> <p><b>Bettering the lives of women through focused economic and social development programs will help prevent sexual exploitation and abuse from taking root. Many of the victims of sexual exploitation and abuse do not see themselves as victims. They are survivors because they are doing what they must to support themselves and their families in a hostile environment. Until women in post-conflict countries have the means to move beyond mere survival, sexual exploitation and abuse are inevitable.</b></p> <p>Though a number of peacekeepers have claimed that their relationships with local women have a genuine romantic dimension to them, the stark inequalities between the parties ensure that such cases are rare. The difference in economic power between UN peacekeepers and local women makes it unlikely that there is any real choice in the relationship for the women involved. This is particularly the case when one examines the young age of many of the victims in the MONUC cases.</p> <p>As the Zeid Report stresses, the extreme poverty and high incidence of sexual violence against women and children during the conflict combined with local acceptance of violent or exploitative behavior and sexist attitudes has created an environment where the rights of women are not respected. Along with the lack of income-generation possibilities, this has led to a culture where commercial sex work is often the only way for women to earn money for their families and to obtain any measure of economic wealth.</p> <p>SRSG Valdez of MINUSTAH acknowledged this reality. “The protracted economic crisis and existing social inequalities in Haiti have made women and girls more vulnerable to certain forms of violence, as well as sexual exploitation and abuse... As a result, they have often been forced to turn to prostitution as a means to earn a living in an impoverished society, thus increasing the risk of being exploited by people with a higher standard of living and a higher economic power.”<sup>36</sup> Because women often do not have control of their own income and how it is used, women must have far greater economic opportunities to reduce the incidence of “survival prostitution.”</p> <p>The SRSGs of MINUSTAH and UNMIL strictly prohibit mission personnel from engaging in relations with commercial sex workers. Beyond any moral rationale, the prohibition, if honored, reduces the demand factor that causes an exponential growth in the commercial sex industry, which in turn may jeopardize efforts to maintain rule of law and effective peace in precarious post-conflict situations.<sup>37</sup> The UN and donors must move to address issues of trafficking and commercial sex work in the areas in which it operates. Instead of focusing on preventing access to needed contraceptives and assistance for women who have had to engage in commercial sex work, donors should instead focus on providing income-generation assistance for women.</p> <p>In Refugees International's (RI) many missions to post-conflict countries, women refugees, IDPs, and survivors of gender-based violence have overwhelmingly asked for income generation activities and microcredit support to start businesses. Particularly vulnerable are women who are former combatants. RI interviewed female combatants in Liberia who were raped, although they preferred to say they were ‘forced to have sex.’ They expressed the desire to start small</p>
<p>24</p>	<p>MUST BOYS BE BOYS? ENDING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION &amp; ABUSE IN UN PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS</p>



*A young woman sells items in a market in Monrovia.*

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businesses in Monrovia because they would not be allowed to return to their home villages. “I just want to sell some small things in the market here. There is nothing for me back home,” an 18-year-old former combatant with a child from her time in the armed forces told RI. Humanitarian agencies also informed RI about female combatants who had been ostracized from their communities and had returned to the areas where they had been demobilized to sell their bodies to UN peacekeepers in order to feed and support their children.

Eradicating sexual exploitation by peacekeepers is only possible if the status of women in post-conflict countries is improved. This will demand a sustained and coherent focus by donors and international agencies to find practical ways to challenge and overcome the social, cultural, and political determinants of discrimination against women. Women’s needs must be prioritized in economic development activities and as the formal employment sector is enhanced, women must be given an opportunity to play a role in

rebuilding their country. At a minimum, all programming must include women in the decisions that will impact their lives after the international community moves on to the next crisis. Women’s expanded roles in male-dominated areas are critical to understanding and expanding their ability to take charge of their lives.

**Refugees International therefore recommends that:**

- Donors fund income-generation projects and micro-credit schemes aimed at women in post-conflict countries;
- Donors and designers of DDR programs pay particular attention to the reintegration needs of former female combatants;
- All donors ensure that programs in post-conflict countries mainstream a gender perspective and encourage women’s empowerment in social, political, and economic activities.

*A Brazilian peacekeeper patrols the Bel Air neighborhood of Port-au-Prince, Haiti.*

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## CONCLUSION

The “boys will be boys” attitude which has characterized UN peacekeeping missions since Cambodia in the early 1990s is slowly changing. Positive developments include the appointment of a female SRSG in Burundi, the inclusion of gender advisors on assessment missions, and increased importance of the Office of Gender Advisors within peacekeeping missions. The Zeid Report is an honest and far-reaching report that makes numerous important and bold recommendations, notably that troop-contributing countries hold on-site courts-martial for guilty parties and before deployment adopt formal memoranda of understanding to forward the cases of sexual exploitation and abuse to their competent national or military authorities.

As the UN continues to discuss new reforms to strengthen its agencies, key changes must be made to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse and the tolerance of these activities throughout the United Nations. The scandals that have tarnished the UN’s image in the countries that it has been deployed to help are intolerable and must not be repeated. In the climate of reform, the women and children who have been exploited and abused must not be forgotten.

Refugees International supports the major recommendations in the Secretary-General’s report and urges the major troop-contributing countries to adopt them. RI recognizes, however, that financial and human resources will be required to support the overall strategy. While this report is an important first step, these initiatives must be fully supported and funded by all members of the United Nations. If donors are serious about ending sexual exploitation and ensuring the protection of victims of conflict throughout the world, they must give the United Nations the resources that it needs to fight this problem within the framework of its peacekeeping operations.

The Zeid report has called for the creation of an external watchdog organization. The United Nations must bring in organizations with expertise on sexual exploitation, victim assistance, and personnel issues to ensure that new policies that are being created are actually implemented throughout the organization and in the field. The only way that sexual exploitation and abuse can be ended in UN peacekeeping missions is if the policies are developed in a transparent manner and compliance is guaranteed by an outside independent organization.

In addition, while the United Nations is addressing the problem of sexual exploitation and abuse of vulnerable women by its peacekeeping troops, similar attention and training are not currently being provided to the African Union mission in Sudan (AMIS). Since sexual exploitation and abuse of vulnerable women is not limited to UN peacekeeping troops but has plagued militaries around the world, it is imperative that AMIS troops be held to the same standards as UN peacekeeping troops.

Every SRSG and military commander has a “zero tolerance” policy when it comes to sexual exploitation and abuse, but without the ability to actually implement these recommendations, zero tolerance is meaningless.

**In the climate of UN reform, the women and children who have been exploited and abused must not be forgotten.**

## REFUGEES INTERNATIONAL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

### Mainstreaming gender principles into UN peacekeeping missions

- DPKO move to hire more male gender advisors to counter-balance the idea that gender issues can only be addressed by women;
- Donors and others interested in effective peacekeeping and UN reform continue to advocate for increased attention to mainstreaming of gender principles within all UN bodies;
- UN peacekeeping missions separate the positions of gender advisor and Sexual Exploitation Focal Point or personnel involved in conduct and discipline units. If this is not possible, adequate resources, both financial and human, must be allocated to the position;
- Member states provide more human resources within DPKO Headquarters for gender mainstreaming;
- Member states actively put forward the names of qualified female candidates for senior management positions;
- The UN Security Council encourage more female representation in troop-contributing countries;
- Troop-contributing countries examine their policies for recruiting women in the military and police forces and sending them to peacekeeping missions and send numbers of females proportionate with the national average of women in their security forces;
- US Department of State insist that the contractors it uses to recruit for civilian police officers provide women for UN peacekeeping missions and, if they fail to do so, discontinue their contracts;
- The UN deploy key personnel such as code of conduct officers, Senior Gender

advisors and investigators of Sexual Exploitation and abuse in the early stages of peacekeeping missions.

### Changing attitudes within senior management of UN peacekeeping operations

- The UN make measures to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse part of the performance goals for all managers and commanders and rate managerial performance in accordance with the actual implementation of these goals;
- An independent watchdog organization be set up by humanitarian agencies and donors to monitor actual implementation of UN policies in the field;
- Any SRSG or senior UN employee who fails to implement measures to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse be removed from his or her position.

### Focusing on civilian personnel

- The Secretary-General appoint a group of experts to review UN personnel rules and recommend ways to ensure that loopholes that allow civilian personnel to avoid prosecution be tightened;
- The UN amend Staff Regulations to specifically provide that acts of sexual exploitation and abuse constitute serious misconduct.

### Training within UN peacekeeping missions

- Training on UN universal mandates such as gender equality and enforcement of human rights should be mandatory for civilian and military personnel;
- DPKO must ensure that training on gender equality and human rights is carried out by bona fide trainers with expertise on the subject matter;

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donors fund regional peacekeeping training centers to provide training on gender mainstreaming and sexual exploitation and abuse prevention for troop-contributing countries;</li> <li>• DPKO should conduct an evaluation to determine what messages resonate with peacekeepers and the effectiveness of their trainings;</li> <li>• Militaries from troop-contributing countries actively work with local women’s groups in their own countries to design culturally appropriate responses to mainstreaming gender and combating and combating sexual exploitation and abuse;</li> <li>• Country commanders train their troops using country-specific training modules and verify completion of training in writing to the Force Commander;</li> <li>• Military commanders and civilian personnel supervisors follow up and continually emphasize training on sexual exploitation and abuse.</li> </ul> <p><b>Improving access to the UN complaint system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public Information directors for UN peacekeeping missions design programs along with local women’s groups to inform and educate the local population regarding sexual exploitation and abuse;</li> <li>• Public Information programs in UN Peacekeeping missions communicate the findings of investigations into sexual exploitation and abuse;</li> <li>• The UN actively move to protect “whistle-blowers” by strengthening confidentiality rules;</li> <li>• The UN install a person focused on coordinating actions towards trafficking in all UN peacekeeping missions.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Empowering women in the local communities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Donors fund income-generation projects and micro-credit schemes aimed at women in post-conflict countries;</li> <li>• Donors and designers of DDR programs pay particular attention to the reintegration needs of former female combatants;</li> <li>• All donors ensure that programs in post-conflict countries mainstream a gender perspective and encourage women’s empowerment in social, political, and economic activities.</li> </ul>
<p>WWW.REFUGEESINTERNATIONAL.ORG</p>	<p>29</p>

## ANNEX

### ***UN Code of Conduct for Peacekeepers (Extracted from UN Training Module)***

#### **UN Peacekeepers will always:**

- Conduct ourselves in a professional and disciplined manner
- Support and encourage proper conduct among our fellow peacekeepers
- Treat inhabitants of the host country with respect, courtesy and consideration
- Respect local customs and practices through awareness and respect for the culture, religion, traditions and gender issues
- Be aware of the human rights of women and children and never violate them
- Behave in a way that does not exacerbate violence [sic] of the human rights of women and children in the host country

#### **UN Peacekeepers will never:**

- Bring discredit upon the UN or member nations through improper personal conduct, failure to perform duties or abuse of position
- Take any action that might jeopardize the mission
- Abuse alcohol, use or traffic in drugs
- Commit any act that could result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to members of the local population, especially women and children
- Become involved in sexual liaisons which could affect impartiality, or the well-being of others.

*The Pakistani Battalion announces its core values to the host community in Sierra Leone.*

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## NOTES

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