The Impact of Women's Activism on the Peace Negotiations in Cyprus

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Abstract:

Our paper will focus on Cypriot women's activism with particular reference to the work of the Gender Advisory Team (GAT), which has used the UNSC Resolution 1325 to produce specific recommendations to the negotiators and the third parties dealing with the solution of the Cyprus conflict. We will discuss specifically GAT's recommendations to the issue of Governance and Power-Sharing from a feminist perspective and how this has been brought to the negotiating table. We will also discuss the application of the gender-ethnicity nexus in the context of citizenship and belonging. We will draw on the parameters used to discuss citizenship in the ongoing Cyprus peace negotiations. Seeing these parameters against those of the 1960 independence Constitution, the paper will discuss shifts in governmentality through the conflict and post-conflict periods, concentrating at each point on their presumptions about gender. In this sense, it is argued that the current discussions on citizenship are partly the result of unacknowledged considerations of gender, largely placed on the table by gender activists. This situation poses a question about how we are to interpret the paradoxical incorporation of activist women's voices in peace processes.

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Understanding Feminist Peace

- *Quota systems are the most anti-feminist policy that we could ask for*
- *Why do you say that?*
- *Because the women that get into post are not always the best candidates*
- *You mean by comparison to the male politicians we've had so far?*
- *Touché [laugh]*

The dialogue above, between a Greek-Cypriot public figure and a Turkish-Cypriot party member, took place during a gathering of Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot women involved in politics, organized by the Gender Advisory Team (GAT), to coordinate a 2015 petition campaign on integrating women's perspectives into the peace negotiation process. The Turkish-Cypriot interlocutor has been involved in lobbying activities that resulted in some Turkish-Cypriot parties instituting their own gender quota rules; the Greek-Cypriot has often brought to public attention the social contribution of women and the effects of major political events on them.

We open with this quote to underscore a number of things about feminist understandings of peace, which we relate in the rest of the article to UNSCR 1325 – that such understandings are multiple and complex, that their confluence cannot be taken for granted, that open discussion can resolve some of the issues and probably not all, that the logic of male dominance is engrained in places we might not expect to find it, that politics can indeed be done otherwise but that 'otherwise' often remains to be conceived and argued over. These insights, like the quote above, are not by any means unique to Cyprus. Indeed, we are certain that many of the feminist peace researchers reading the lines above will already have smirked, remembering similar conversations from their own field sites. And in Cyprus too, these arguments were not being aired for the first time.

What we want to suggest is that quota systems, feminism, strategy, or politics, are refracted by questions of peace. Had this not been an inter-ethnic dialogue, the point might not have been conceded as easily. The Greek-Cypriot participant marveled, after her interlocutor had left, at how far 'ahead' Turkish-Cypriot women were in terms of feminist politics – comparable efforts by Greek-Cypriot women already underway notwithstanding. Feminist peace is by definition an intersectionality question. Feminist peace activists are gendered and racialized subjects at once. The moment either of those filters is set aside, the dialogue becomes a different sort of exchange: a progressive Other woman from whom we might learn might become a far-off (co-ethnic) radical who might, or indeed should, be dismissed. Inversely, a feminist critic of our own military violence might be right, under the wrong ethnic sign she is a nationalist.

In this article we want to concentrate on what this means for power-sharing. In coining the term 'intersectionality' in 1989, Crenshaw referred to multiple forms of discrimination facing women of colour in the US – like standing on an

intersection, at risk of being harmed in the direction of race or gender (Crenshaw, 1989). In feminist peace work such structures of discrimination persist as we navigate questions of why, how, and who. Is peace work to be justified on the basis of essentialised gendered dispositions (Ruddick, 1989) when feminism's starting point is the social construction of gender (Elshtain, 1987; Sylvester, 1987)? Does militarism remain the key site of patriarchy (Enloe, 1989) when gender is de-essentialised? How far are feminist versions of peace situated and contextual (Mohanty, 1995; Spivak, 1999)? Who speaks for non-hierarchical feminist peace when access presumes hierarchy?

These questions have guided feminist scholarship on peace and conflict and remain very real in practice in Cyprus. They are questions implied in the ways we have seen women reject the 'feminist' label, debate special measures, discuss citizenship, criticize mainstreaming mechanisms, write and re-write her-stories, punctuate public debate, or question women in office. Our purpose in this article is to elucidate these connections between theory and practice as apply to Cyprus and extract lessons about such connections for elsewhere. We take as our point of focus the group we have most closely associated with, the Gender Advisory Team, and its story of providing a blueprint on the use of UNSCR 1325 on feminist practice on the ground. Both of us have been founding members of the group, and have worked with others to hatch out the group's recommendations to peace negotiators, as well as in lobbying for their inclusion in the peace talks. And since 2015, we have also sat on the Technical Committee of Gender Equality, which is a formal body attached to the negotiations, arising out of the efforts of GAT and other feminist activists.

GAT was formed in 2009 as a loose group of women, Greek-Cypriots and Turkish-Cypriots, who hail from different backgrounds: about half are academics, some are involved in various NGOs, some have political profiles – and these roles also overlap. A common point of reference for many of us is previous activity in bicommunal groups, working towards peace, and a sensitivity against gender bias. The group is not registered, it does not hold strictly regular meetings, it does not have a hierarchy. It has in the past held activities like seminars, conferences, consultations with other women, and has met negotiating officials, including UN. It initially came together through efforts to coordinate activities and ideas about 'women, peace, and security'; a number of platforms where we ended up meeting each other and picking up conversation threads were centred around UNSCR 1325. Yet GAT was concerned not to 'transpose' the Resolution's parameters unreflectively, but to use them as a tool, applying them to realities in Cyprus and towards addressing local issues.[1] Thus, what has held the group together through the years was largely the shared understanding that what constitutes key problems in the Cyprus conflict and their gendered nature are namely nationalist and militarist mentalities.

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[1] See also Demetriou, Olga and Maria Hadjipavlou, 2016. 'Engendering the Post-Liberal Peace in Cyprus: UNSC Resolution 1325 as a Tool.' in Richmond, Oliver and Sandra *Pogodda (eds) Post-Liberal Peace Transitions: Between Peace Formation and State Formation.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

This understanding has also driven the group's key output, sets of recommendations to the negotiators about parameters that need to be included in a future constitution and legal and other political arrangements so that gender and conflict dynamics may begin to change substantially after a settlement is agreed. Indicatively, the recommendations range from the inclusion of relevant international agreements within the settlement, to the introduction of quota systems, dedicated bodies and oversight mechanisms, to the reform of the military and education system, and specific provisions on property and economic rights. Some of these recommendations state the obvious, others have the potential to turn the logic of negotiation on its head, as we explain next.

Feminist Peace and UNSCR 1325

- *But why are we talking about citizenship as a women's issue?*
- *Because it affects families and the ways they are constituted.*
- *How? Give me an example.*
- *If the law says marriage is an issue for the communal chambers, as it did in 1960, that precludes inter-ethnic options. You are undermining people's right to choose.*
- *And if you tie citizenship to ethnicity via electoral lists you are reproducing the divisions that led us here.*
- *So you could make constituent state citizenship a matter of registration at 18.*
- *And that would go far beyond the 'small minority'. It would mean everyone is faced with the question of who they are or want to be.*
- *And entertain the possibilities.*
- *That would actually be the most radical proposal ever made on shifting the ethnic premises of the conflict...*

This exchange has been reconstructed from discussions between GAT members as the recommendations were being drafted. It is indicative of the set of questions that we have found ourselves asking and answering in attempts to apply UNSCR 1325 to the situation in Cyprus. The central question was always one: How does power-sharing relate to gender / women? Sometimes, the answers seemed obvious, sometimes debate and arguing yielded tighter and more significant interventions than originally envisioned.

How does one use UNSCR 1325? Since its adoption in 2000, numerous assessments pointed to both strengths and weaknesses of UNSCR 1325.[2] Equally,

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[2] See Naraghi-Anderlini, Sanam B. "Women, Peace and Security: A Policy Audit." London: International Alert (2001); Hill, Felicity, Mikele Aboitiz, and Sara Poehlman-Doumbouya. "Nongovernmental organizations' role in the buildup and implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325." Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 28, no. 4 (2003): 1255-1269; Hill, Felicity, Carol Cohn, and Cynthia Enloe. "UN Security Council Resolution 1325 three years on: gender, security and organizational change." Center for Gender in Organizations (2004); Bell, Christine, and Catherine O'Rourke. "Peace agreements or pieces of paper? The impact of UNSC Resolution 1325 on peace processes and their agreements." International & Comparative Law Quarterly 59, no. 4 (2010): 941-980; Otto, Dianne. "A Sign of Weakness-Disrupting Gender Certainties in the Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325." Mich. J. Gender & L. 13

accounts of its implementation around the world show context-relevance: Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, the Balkans, Cyprus, Brazil, Ireland, Israel, and various African states.[3] Unsurprisingly, these assessments have been increasingly critical and cynical. Initially, issues of scope were noted proposing policies to bolster the Resolution,[4] then gaps of implementation were registered,[5] and later hard-hitting analyses of the neocolonial politics of National Action Plans and the coincidence of its follow-up resolutions to a militarist and securitizing war-on-terror agenda.[6] In other work[7] we have examined the framing of UNSCR1325

(2006): 113-175; Otto, Dianne. "The Security Council's alliance of gender legitimacy: the symbolic capital of Resolution 1325." Fault lines of international legitimacy (2010): 239-275; Reilly, Niamh. "Seeking gender justice in post-conflict transitions: towards a transformative women's human rights approach." International Journal of Law in Context 3, no. 2 (2007): 155-172; Fujio, Christy C. "Invisible soldiers: how and why post-conflict processes ignore the needs of ex-combatant girls." JL & Soc. Challenges 10 (2008): 1-21; Tryggestad, Torunn L. "Trick or treat? The UN and implementation of security council resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security." Global Governance: a review of multilateralism and international organizations 15, no. 4 (2009): 539-557; Gumru, Belgin F., and Jan Marie Fritz. "Women, peace and security: An analysis of the national action plans developed in response to UN Security Council Resolution 1325." Societies without Borders 4, no. 2 (2009): 209-225; Gibbings, Sheri Lynn. "No angry women at the United Nations: political dreams and the cultural politics of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325." International Feminist Journal of Politics 13, no. 4 (2011): 522-538; Pratt, Nicola. "Reconceptualizing gender, reinscribing racial–sexual boundaries in international security: the case of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on "Women, Peace and Security"." International Studies Quarterly 57, no. 4 (2013): 772-783; Olsson, Louise, and Theodora-Ismene Gizelis, eds. Gender, Peace and Security: Implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Routledge, 2015; Cook, Sam. "The 'woman-in-conflict'at the UN Security Council: a subject of practice." International Affairs 92, no. 2 (2016): 353-372; Ní Aoláin, Fionnuala. "The 'war on terror'and extremism: assessing the relevance of the Women, Peace and Security agenda." International Affairs 92, no. 2 (2016): 275-291.

[3] See Afghanistan (Neutwirth, Jessica. "Women and peace and security: The implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325." Duke J. Gender L. & Pol'y 9 (2002): 253-260), Sri Lanka (Abeysekera, Sunila. "Maximizing the Achievement of Women's Human Rights in Conflict-Transformation: The Case of Sri Lanka." Colum. J. Transnat'l L. 41 (2002): 523-540), the DRC (Puechguirbal, Nadine. "Gender training for peacekeepers: Lessons from the DRC." International Peacekeeping 10, no. 4 (2003): 113-128), Kosovo (Sharapov, Kiril. "Methodological approaches to assessing United Nations gender mainstreaming policies in Kosovo." Journal of Peacebuilding & Development 2, no. 2 (2005): 99-106), Cyprus (Hadjipavlou, Maria. "No Permission to Cross: Cypriot women's dialogue across the divide." Gender, Place & Culture 13, no. 4 (2006): 329-351), Liberia and Sierra-Leone (Nduka-Agwu, Adibeli. "'Doing gender'after the war: Dealing with gender mainstreaming and sexual exploitation and abuse in UN peace support operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone." Civil Wars 11, no. 2 (2009): 179-199), Uganda (Maina, Grace. "The complexity of applying UN Resolution 1325 in post conflict reintegration processes: The case of Northern Uganda." ACCORD Occasional Paper 5, no. 1 (2011): 1-39), Brazil (Giannini, Renata, Mariana Lima, and Pérola Pereira. "Brazil and UN Security Council Resolution 1325: Progress and Challenges of the Implementation Process 1." Prism: a Journal of the Center for Complex Operations 6, no. 1 (2016): 178-197), Ireland (Hoewer, Melanie. "UN Resolution 1325 in Ireland: limitations and opportunities of the international framework on women, peace and security." Irish Political Studies 28, no. 3 (2013): 450-468), Israel (Aharoni, Sarai B. "Internal variation in norm localization: Implementing security council resolution 1325 in Israel." Social Politics 21, no. 1 (2014): 1-25), the Balkans (Irvine, Jill A. "Leveraging Change: Women's Organizations and the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the Balkans." International Feminist Journal of Politics 15, no. 1 (2013): 20-38).

[4] For example, Anderlini, 2001.

[5] Otto, 2006

[6] NiAolain, 2016 and this volume

[7] Demetriou and Hajipavou, 2016.

within a liberal peace agenda. At the same time, we noted the possibilities it has opened up for articulating local concerns. We therefore concluded, that despite its drawbacks, and indeed because of them, UNSCR 1325 should be seen as a tool towards feminist peace politics rather than an end. We start here from this premise to offer a local interpretation of UNSCR 1325.

UNSCR 1325 is based on four pillars: prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery.[8] This categorization responds well to a processual analysis of conflict, where different stages require different foci of attention but where large policy overlaps also occur. However, in a long-standing stale-mated conflict like Cyprus, these stages may not be as clear-cut and the separation of different policy areas may be more effective. For example, whereas wartime hostilities ended in Cyprus in 1974, the kinds of measures that are normally understood to fall under 'prevention' (e.g. education regarding prevention of conflict and sexual abuse and exploitation) have been diachronically relevant and continue to be so.

Thus, in a slightly adapted form, we suggest an interpretation of the Resolution along a '4 Ps' axis, whereby article sets are mapped onto context and time-specific policies (Table 1). Given the emphasis increasingly being placed on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the form of National Action Plans produced by states, often required as part of their commitments to CEDAW, we suggest that such interpretations, must guide attempts to integrate UNSCR 1325 into local realities. GAT produced recommendations on three of these four broad areas, excepting 'peacekeeping' which does not address local politicians. This exclusion could be read in a postcolonial frame as indicative of a confinement of 'local' initiatives to local actors, leaving global players like the UN outside the scope of scrutiny. But in this case, it was mainly the framing of the negotiations as a local issue, a process led by 'Cypriots for Cypriots' that drove this reading, an issue we explore further in the next section. Much of the work related to participation and protection drew from global and local knowledge of earlier initiatives and demands. GAT's most conceptually demanding work was the interpretation involved in the last area, the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into an eventual agreement. It is here that connections like those between citizenship and family law needed to be thought through and formulated clearly, succinctly, yet without compromising the content.

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[8] For example, Anderlini (2001), USIP (http://www.usip.org/gender_peacebuilding/about_UNSCR_1325, last accessed 18 December 2016), and not least, UN Women's Implementation Report (2012).

Issue	UNSCR 1325 articles	Policy actors	Local applications
Participation	1, 2	Negotiators Politicians	(i) Women in key positions at negotiations (ii) Consideration of input on gender dimensions by negotiators (iii) Quota systems in make-up of negotiating teams
Peacekeeping	3, 4, 5	UN	(i) Appointment of women in top positions in UNFICYP and UN Good Offices missions (ii) Appointment of gender focal points for coordination with civil society (iii) Appointment of gender and law expert in facilitation teams
Protection	6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14	Negotiators Politicians	(i) Investigation and prosecution of gender crimes in the history of the conflict (ii) Monitoring and combating of situation in relation to trafficking (iii) Coordination of justice and police mechanisms to deal with gender crime (iv) Shift of militarist culture
Gender perspectives	7, 8, 15, 16, 17	Negotiators Politicians	(i) Use of gender-sensitive language in the constitution (ii) Inclusion of gender-balance articles in all areas as for example: special measures in governance, flexibility on internal citizenship, uniformity in family law, coordination of all authorities under federal umbrella, coordination in prosecuting gender crimes (iii) Centralisation and reach of gender equality mechanisms in a system that is both networked (from grassroots to government) and coordinated (through single top-level federal body)

Mapping UNSCR 1325 onto the Cyprus peace negotiations

- *These are all good recommendations and we could indeed consider them when the time comes, but it is not time yet.*
- *When would be the time though?*
- *Once we start drafting the constitution.*
- *But then it will be too late: all the crucial decisions will have been taken.*
- *Well, it is not the time yet.*

When GAT began presenting its recommendations to the negotiators back in 2010, it was told that this was not the 'right time'. Exchanges like the above have been had at various points since then. At the same time, there have been various points at which civil society groups, and GAT among them, were urged to 'make their voices heard' because a settlement, and referendums to endorse it, were imminent.

The structure of the political negotiation process has shaped GAT's work in several ways. Since the rejection by the Greek-Cypriot leader and subsequently the Greek-Cypriot public at referendum of a UN-brokered peace settlement in 2004 (a political landmark in the history of the Cyprus conflict referred to until now as the 'Annan Plan period'), the peace negotiations were re-initiated in 2006 on a number of fresh premises. One of these, holds that the new agreement would be 'Cypriot-led'. UN teams, involved in the negotiations under a local office attached to but separate from UNFICYP, the 'UN Good Offices Mission', now 'facilitate' the talks rather than 'mediate' them. This means, as some of the personnel has put it to us, that 'no single word in the agreement can be written by a non-Cypriot'. International expertise on gender and peace agreements, cannot be called in to 'gender proof' an agreed text by editing it once written. This is perhaps more important for gender matters than other issues, because of the complete linguistic and mental shift that a feminist 'change of script' might require. As Elshtain[9] put it in echo of many feminists,[10] '[t]he feminist thinker who wishes to tackle the puzzles of power and take up questions of meaning must consider the nature of language itself'. Thus, this admonition to 'wait until the right time' means that the mental shift required to push gender equality beyond stylistics is unlikely.

Since 2006, teams of experts have constituted working groups and technical committees advising the negotiators. Working groups (on governance and

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[9] Elshtain, Jean Bethke. "Feminist discourse and its discontents: Language, power, and meaning." Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society 7, no. 3 (1982): 603-621, p.603

[10] A genealogy of linguistic investigation can be traced from Simone de Beauvoir ("The Second Sex. 1949." Trans. HM Parshley. Harmondsworth: Penguin. 1972) onwards, to Derrida's *phallogocentrism* (Derrida, Jacques. "Of grammatology, trans." Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak Baltimore, 1976.) and its take up by Cixous (Cixous, Hélène. "1981: The Laugh of the Medusa." New French Feminisms. An Anthology. 1975.), Irigaray (Irigaray, Luce. "This sex which is not one." Feminisms: an anthology of literary theory and criticism 1977) and Kristeva (Kristeva, Julia. Desire in language: A semiotic approach to literature and art. Columbia University Press, 1980.). The adoption of discourse analysis as standard practice in feminist critique is outlined and furthered in Lazar's call for a specifically feminist critical discourse analysis (Lazar, 2005).

power-sharing, EU matters, property, territory, economy, security, and citizenship) were set up separately on the two sides.[11] Technical committees comprised members from both sides sitting together and discussing aspects of the political problem affecting daily life both before and after an agreement. These initially dealt with humanitarian affairs, health, economic and commercial matters, criminal matters, cultural heritage, crossings, broadcasting, and environment. Since 2015, three more committees were established, on culture, education and gender equality (which we examine later in the article).[12] The headings under which negotiators and experts work are 'chapters'.

GAT took these 'chapter' areas as the base on which to articulate its recommendations and focused them on governance and power-sharing, property, citizenship, and economy. These were considered the most thorny, with power-sharing and property considered to be the two make-or-break issues. As both were taken up in the negotiations first, there was scope, we thought, for early intervention. Citizenship was also considered important because of the profound implications that an alternative reading of citizenship vis-à-vis the public-private domain involved for a host of other issues. And economy was included because as the financial crisis began to impact Cyprus, the need for a gendered dimension to economic matters gained urgency for GAT.

As much as structural parameters determined GAT's thematic work, temporal ones determined its modality. This work has been at points dense and productive, at others frustrated. Along with the 'Cypriot-led' dictum, this phase of negotiations is also said to be 'open-ended', without 'suffocating timeframes'. This means that while chapters can be discussed and negotiated at any stage of the process, 'nothing is agreed until everything is agreed' – i.e. the sides can go back and amend their positions on earlier points of agreement (or disagreement). As leaders on both sides have seen elections approaching, they have retracted on earlier positions, appeared less conciliatory than on the table, and at times broke off the talks. The most recent breakdown in the summer of 2017 is yet another example of this trend.

This on-again-off-again process also frustrates civil society groups who have seen their efforts become irrelevant overnight – and this has been more detrimental to the reconciliationist side than the rejectionist. It has also led to increasing alienation. Mounting criticism has presented the talks as a closed process, which fails to incorporate the concerns of the public and political parties, and which takes place without their involvement. As other civil society groups, GAT activists have also felt irrelevant to the talks. However, recognizing the great gaps between traditional understandings of politics and its 'change of script' mentality, GAT formulated its recommendations on the basis of the minimum of information being provided, i.e. the 'chapter' structure. GAT has had to work with the process, frustrating as it might be, or be dismissed as irrelevant 'when the time is (finally) right'.

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[11] http://www.philenews.com/el-gr/top-stories/885/186397/aftes-einai-oi-omades-ergasias-kypriakou-tis-ek-plevras

[12] http://www.uncyprustalks.org/

Approaching the issues

- *There is no issue of 'internal citizenship'. That will be simply a question of voting registration. All rights will be guaranteed on both sides.*
- *Does this include education?*
- *How do you mean?*
- *For example integrated or offering schools for children not belonging to one of the two dominant ethnicities.*
- *That has not been discussed.*

This interaction took place between GAT members and one of the officials involved in the negotiations. It is indicative of what we suggest is a feature of equivocality that characterizes the way in which the level of policy-making has negotiated the 'change of script' suggested by GAT with the letter of the recommendations it has produced. This equivocality, we want to argue, allows the channels of communication to remain open, on the one hand, officialdom to appear ready to listen, but policy to remain fixed to the script. We consider three key examples below.

Coordination: The first of GAT's recommendations were on power-sharing and institutional set-up. Most of them are the self-evident calls to integrate international instruments in state law (most of which the Republic has ratified anyway), and set up effective monitoring bodies. Perhaps the difficult task here is to define 'effective' in such a way so as to ensure that current practices of having bodies that are understaffed, under-resourced, and lacking in credibility and power is not replicated in the future state. GAT recommended that:

> [p]olitical and public institutions … such as gender equality mechanisms, focal points, a special Ministry or a specific portfolio within a given Ministry, a parliamentary commission, a special desk at the Ombudsperson's office, and a separate unit within the federal police force [be established]. Effective coordination among federal units and between federal and constituent state units must be ensured.[13]

This recommendation was well received by negotiators. However, it is not a foregone conclusion that a centralized and effective mechanism such as a Ministry is part and parcel of political thinking about the new state of affairs. In fact, the federal structures being discussed do not include any major federal body to deal with 'soft issues' like social affairs, societal integration, human rights, peace and reconciliation, family matters, or discrimination. They deal with the 'hard issues' of foreign affairs, defence, justice and public order, and civic rights. This is one example of how 'listening' (and apparently endorsing) is neither really listening nor endorsing.

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[13] A complete list and explanatory notes of GAT's recommendations can be found in the group's 2012 report 'Women's Peace in Cyprus', on http://www.gat1325.org.

Special Measures: Another suggestion GAT has made was the introduction of a gender quota system in elections – to complement the ethnic quota being discussed. Women's poor representation under current structures has been pointed out frequently.[14] This point was readily accepted by officials. Yet, and even though at the level of political parties women's representation is now a matter of policy, the introduction of gender quota systems, both under the current structures and as part of a future arrangement, are resisted. We posit that this is an outcome of the continuing marginalization of gender issues, even within the frame of gender equality – it is as if male politicians want to bestow equality to their female colleagues (and thereby also control it), but still refuse to consent to that equality being taken, and thus taken out of their control. And this is in the background of the CEDAW having asked the Republic explicitly in 2013 to begin a public awareness campaign on quotas. So when officials applaud the suggested introduction of a quota system, they point to the political parties, saying that it is them that need to carry this out – and this stifles further discussion.

Citizenship: GAT was also concerned about the intersectional dimensions of exclusion and the ways in which ideal constructions of the 'citizen' create inequalities for majorities, minorities, and others. Citizenship in the future state, which will operate as a 'bizonal bicommunal federation' will consist of two levels: federal state and 'constituent states'. Because the make-up of the constituent states, which are the entities which will, with some territorial adjustment, approximate the current territorial set-up of a Greek-Cypriot-run south and Turkish-Cypriot-run north, it follows that rights of residence, work, and movement will be tied to rights of representation. In other words, civic and political life will develop chiefly on the level of the constituent states and will draw into its fold all rights of citizenship, including economic, social and cultural ones. GAT argued that this essentializes citizenship as something that emanates from the act of voting, ethnically-determined as it is (to ensure that the north is Turkish-Cypriot-run, it must have a qualified majority of Turkish-Cypriot residents, which means that social and cultural institutions will cater to this Turkish-Cypriot majority, and so on).

This is the logic of the 1960 Constitution which gives rise to an article stipulating that 'a married woman belongs to the community to which her husband belongs' (§7a) and that 'a male or female child under the age of twenty-one who is not married shall belong to the Community to which his or her father belongs' (§7b). In GAT's view, freedom of settlement, residence, work, and the availability of cultural and social institutions should not be constrained by a logic of ethno-political purity. As critical feminist legal scholar Drucilla Cornell proposed, '[w]e need the ability to say "no" as well as to say "yes" to our community'.[15] Whether

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[14] For example , most recently MIGS, Φύλο, Εξουσία και Δημοκρατία: Η Συμβολή των Γυναικών στη Βουλή των Αντιπροσώπων [Gender, Power, and Democracy: the Contribution of Women in the House of Representatives (2016); Yirmibeşoğlu, Gözde. "Constraints on women politicians in Northern Cyprus." Equal Opportunities International 27, no. 8 (2008): 692-708.
[15] Cornell, Drucilla L. "Institutionalization of meaning, recollective imagination and the potential for transformative legal interpretation." University of Pennsylvania Law Review 136, no. 4 (1988): 1135-1229, p.1226.

in a Turkish-Cypriot-run north, or a Greek-Cypriot-run south, children, GAT argued, should be able to learn both languages at school, follow the same curriculum, be made aware of cultural differences as regards Greek- and Turkish- Cypriot identity but also beyond them, as much as citizens should have the opportunity to work and live anywhere on the island, irrespective of where they might register their vote. This flies in the face of the logic of ethnic separation, yet without yielding to the Greek-Cypriot nationalist position that calls for a unitary state in order to dilute the possibility of Turkish-Cypriot political representation. It sets different priorities for the system of governance, that emphasise education, family life, and social and cultural life, over electoral patterns and presumptions about them.

It was surprising to be assured that these concerns were answered, and that the issue of constituent state citizenship is 'simply an administrative matter', about where one registers their vote. Yet when probing how this translates onto education, we are also being told that there is no discussion about education. It is instead, reportedly, equally understood that the education systems will be separate in the constituent states. Education too, like voting, seems to be 'a purely administrative' matter. One in which of course, citizens, will grow up communicating in English and learning that they hail from two adversarial backgrounds. This seems the ultimate example of equivocality: saying 'yes' and meaning 'no'. Through this equivocality, issues can be deemed 'administrative', placed on hold until 'the time is right' and ultimately dealt with in a way that undermines the mainstreaming logic on which they are premised.

The question then naturally follows: how can such work be judged as successful? And are the failures inherent in the problems associated with UNSCR 1325? In the next section we offer a single answer to both questions: UNSCR 1325's limitations are both what frustrate the process of struggling for a feminist peace but also what enable it in the first place.

Getting heard

> *mindful of the important role of women in peace negotiations, as recognized by the Security Council in resolution 1325 (2000), I would encourage the sides to continue their engagement with the Gender Advisory Team… and to seriously consider its gender-focused recommendations on the main areas under discussion in the peace talks. (§43)*

Ban Ki Moon acknowledged GAT's efforts in his report on Cyprus on 24 November 2010.[16] At a point when recommendations were still in formation and the kinds of debates exemplified in the second section were taking place within the group, this was significant. GAT was the first, and to date only group in Cyprus, to organize on the basis of UNSCR 1325. GAT has found eager ears in

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[16] UN Security Council.Report of the Secretary-General on his mission of good offices in Cyprus, 24 November 2010.(Doc. Ref:s/2010/603). Accessible at http://www.uncyprustalks.org/media/SG%20Reports/S_2010_603.pdf (last accessed 4 May 2015).

local UN, who brokered communication with negotiators. In that period, UNFICYP (UN Force in Cyprus), the UN's third longest serving UN peacekeeping mission since 1964,[17] got its first female chief, through the appointment of Lisa Buttenheim as Special Representative of the Secretary-General on the island and Head of UNFICYP in 2010. This also coincided with the appointment of Major General Kristin Lund as the first female force commander of UNFICYP in 2014. These appointments were important in supporting local women's initiatives relating to the ongoing peace building process.

This facilitation offered between GAT and the negotiators was as crucial as discussing and exchanging ideas with women within and outside the peace movement and with peace activists outside the women's groups. GAT developed a multi-level strategy, bringing together and mediating between the local, the national, the global, the regional and the civil society. GAT started advocacy and lobbying at the national decision-making levels. GAT wrote letters to the Cypriot leaders. GAT also had several meetings with their advisors and engaged them in discussions concerning the incorporation of a gender sensitive perspective in the negotiations. As a result of this, both negotiators appointed a gender focal point within their offices. GAT also reached out to the civil society levels and shared its work and recommendations with other non-governmental organizations working on peace building in Cyprus. In 2010 and 2012 the UN mission invited GAT representatives and other gender-focused NGOs and practitioners to two open day events in 2010 and 2012 to mark the anniversary of UNSCR 1325. During these deliberations, Greek and Turkish Cypriot women from different organizations identified specific obstacles to women's participation in decision-making and in the formal or informal peace talks. It is from here on that GAT's recommendations to the negotiators take off. GAT also organized events and seminars on human security, citizenship and the family, and gender and citizenship in the EU. Such collaborations also produced major conferences on UNSCR 1325 in 2012 and 2016, and allowed the publication of recommendations in report form, their translation, and the production of a citizenship policy brief. GAT worked as a funneling mechanism, taking the experiences and concerns of grassroots and civil society women and gender activists and articulating them as specific interpretations of UNSCR 1325.

Then, in 2015, shortly after negotiations were re-invigorated following the election of a pro-reconciliation leader by Turkish-Cypriots, the leaders announced the set-up of a Technical Committee on Gender Equality. GAT responded to this announcement by contacting women from its wide network, involved in politics, public life, and civil society, to discuss common strategies. The meetings were informal, took place over a short amount of time but in a series to allow those present to express opinions and be heard, and proceeded on a loose agenda. What should a concerted action consist of? Should it be congratulatory or critical? Should it include guidelines for further steps? These questions evolved into larger and smaller ones: should 'feminism' be mentioned? Are we all feminists? Should quotas be set and at what percentages? What is the

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[17] After UNTSO in Israel/Palestine (1948) and UNMOGIP in India/Pakistan (1949).

meaning of gender mainstreaming? What does UNSCR 1325 mean? These were questions that GAT had thought long and hard about since its establishment in 2009, but was now discussing in detail with women who shared part of its political commitments, but by no means entirely.

The exercise resulted in the online posting of a petition, which in its first 10 days of going live gathered over 200 signatures.[18] The petition called for gender balancing in all negotiating teams of 30%-50%, gender experts inserted across the teams, international expertise at the intersections of gender, law and conflict resolution to be called upon in gender proofing documents, and transparency of the process. Nearly two years later, the specific parameters remain unheeded. Perhaps the most valuable insight that this experience offered was that support, however limited, is readily at hand and that women, as our opening section suggested, are ready to listen to one another and begin the process of reflection on 'community' that is required, as Cornell and Murphy suggest, in that 'psychic and moral space necessary for groups and individuals to engage with and re-create their multiple identifications [that is to be understood as freedom]'.[19]

Following the establishment of the Technical Committee on Gender Equality, the President of the Republic of Cyprus announced to the Global Leaders Meeting on Achieving Gender Equality and Women's Empowermenton 27 September 2015 that

> *I am pleased to convey that in the margins of the bicommunal negotiations to reaching a settlement on the Cyprus problem, a Technical Committee on Gender Equality has already been established.*[20]

The disturbing word of note, of course is that reference to 'the margins of the negotiations'. In fairness, it should be said that the choice of word is probably a translation slip, from the Greek word '*plésio*', meaning frame, which is often used to refer to the mandate of the Committee on local occasions. However, even in this understanding of 'frame' the place of women's and gender issues continued to be, as a visual representation, something that goes around a picture and not in its content. This flippant description of the Committee's mandate as 'marginal', in other words, is telling of the mentality that governs gender equality in Cyprus. The surprising aspect of the statement is not so much in its substance, but more in the performance, i.e. the fact that it was uttered so innocently, without consideration of the decorum of 'thinking but not saying'. There is no pretense of equivocality here – and this shows how adamantly women's place in the centre of the picture (rather than its frame) is being resisted.

At the current juncture, with negotiations having reached a stalemate yet again, the step of women into the frame continues to remain elusive. At the same time, the strides taken must be recognised. Since 2009, other groups have also taken up UNSCR 1325 in their work. Examples are the 'Where are the Women?' project

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[18] See at http://www.ipetitions.com/petition/gender-in-cyprus-peace-negotiations (last accessed 21 December 2016).

[19] Cornell, Drucilla, and Sara Murphy. "Anti-racism, multiculturalism and the ethics of identification." Philosophy & social criticism 28, no. 4 (2002): 419-449.

[20] Full text at http://www.cyprusun.org/?p=7289, last accessed 21 December 2015.

carried out by the Cyprus Community Media Centre in 2013-2014,[21] a gender brief prepared by the polling project 'Cyprus 2015' in 2012,[22] an emergency motion by the European Women's Lobby on the peace negotiations in 2015,[23] and a 'white book' produced by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation in 2017.[24] GAT has been consulted in these initiatives and it is in recognition its efforts that a number of its members were included in the Technical Committee. The new First Lady on the Turkish-Cypriot side in 2015, who has been credited with suggesting the set-up of the Technical Committee, had been a long-time gender and peace activist and friend of the group. This is again indicative of the significance of prior activity and networking.

The Technical Committee on Gender Equality has a unique mandate in relation to other committees,[25] tasked to identify and suggest solutions for everyday current problems, as well to envision a federal settlement. This dual role allows the committee to work on different directions. In its public presentations thus far (which delimit the extent to which members are able to discuss the Committee's work) it has issued statements on different occasions, hosted cultural events under its auspices, and explained that it produced and delivered to the negotiators documents with detailed suggestions on the gender parameters of a settlement. The significance of this expanded role goes further than 'ticking the 'gender box', pointing to an important, if inadvertent, contribution of all the preparatory work that GAT exemplifies. Along with Committees on Culture and Education also set up in 2015, the Committee on Gender Equality represents the leaders' attempt to listen to 'civil society', as they comprise activists who sit alongside technocrats from the public sector in the two sides. In practice problems do persist, and criticism has been raised regarding transparency in practice, especially given that committee work cannot be publicly presented and recommendations will be utilized when 'everything has been agreed'. Whether negotiations resume in the near future or not, these are valuable lessons for officials and activists alike.

Conclusion

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[21] See
http://www.cypruscommunitymedia.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=568&Itemid=132&lang=en
[22] See http://3n589z370e6o2eata9wahfl4.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/11/2012_11_07_CYP_Brief_Gender_Peace_Talks.pdf
[23] See http://www.womenlobby.org/EWL-calls-on-Cypriot-leaders-to-include-women-on-an-equal-footing-with-men-in
[24] http://www.fescyprus.org/media/publications/White_book-WEB.pdf
[25] Specifically, it states that: "The Committee will look into the gender perspective of how life in Cyprus is affected as a result of the status quo. Like all other technical committees, it may submit recommendations on how to overcome specific issues or suggest ways of better integrating the gender perspective. It is a mechanism for bringing gender specific and sensitive issues to the forefront and, in this context and bearing in mind UNSCR 1325, may also provide input as to what needs to be borne in mind from a gender perspective in the framework of the settlement. Specific recommendations on ensuring gender equality in a united Cyprus may be submitted to this end."

- *You need to decide whether you are a think-tank or a movement; and if the latter, you need to get other women on board*

Visiting UN advisor to GAT members

- *The gay rights activists organize an event and thousands of people join and all the politicians support it. Women organize events and nobody comes.*

Local activist on Open Day workshop organized by UN Women

- *I don't want to use the word 'feminist' to describe myself. I think it is a category used by some women to exclude others by measuring up each other's 'feminism'.*

Local activist on meeting with visiting international women's delegation

In recent years, there has been increased attention in Cyprus on the implementation of UNSCR 1325 in the peace process. GAT's formation was initially spurred by this attention. In meeting with negotiators, politicians, visiting dignitaries, and networking with NGOs, GAT has seen its efforts bear fruit over time. However, we have also become increasingly aware of the criticisms levelled against UNSCR 1325, and its 'sister resolutions' (1820, 1888, 1889, 1920, 2106, 2122, 2242). Taking them together, Ni Aolain[26] eloquently explains, allows us to see them as weak instruments that often reaffirm women's traditional roles and re-establish a neocolonial world order whereby states 'advanced' in gender equality draw up national action plans targeting southern, conflict-ridden and misogynist societies. The quotes we have chosen for this final section illustrate this north-south divide. Visiting dignitaries have unfailingly hailed from the north in the last few years. In GAT's efforts to network with women across the 'south', we have heard from women from Libya, Syria, Egypt, Iraq, Israel/Palestine, Croatia, Greece and Turkey, that 'implementation' is problematic across the region. We therefore take seriously and share, Ni Aolain's concerns about UNSCR 1325 that lead her to question 'whether, as feminists, we should be there'.

As feminist social theorists, who are located in a particular political context that often confronts us with issues of involvement, we are keenly aware of the complex ethical, political, and practical questions implicated in the transition from advocacy based on research and experience to movement-building. We are often positioned at an uncomfortable critical and analytical distance from comparisons and evaluations of other rights against women's or from rejections of feminism as articulated in the quotes above. It is the same discomfort we have grown up feeling vis-à-vis peace activists who had no time for women's voices in previous eras, and with women's organizations who have been unwilling to 'touch the national issue'. We recognize women's efforts in Cyprus as situated, often fragmented and conflictual, but also multiply disempowered.

We therefore believe it is important retain UNSCR 1325 as a tool that can bring together disparate voices, but that it is equally important to attend to meanings

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[26] 2016, and here

that far exceed the written text but allow local interpretations to open up spaces where 'freedom' can be imagined anew. GAT continues to look to UNSCR 1325 as a promise, albeit a limited one, which we need to extend into our concrete everyday, and the sharing of power that attends it.