

CAN ABORTION RIGHTS BE INTEGRATED INTO THE WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY AGENDA?

Dr Claire Pierson (@piersonclaire)

Manchester Metropolitan University

Background

- Pierson, C & Thomson, J (forthcoming) Can abortion rights be integrated into the women, peace and security agenda? *International Feminist Journal of Politics*
- Growing influence of WPS agenda in furthering women's rights and security in conflict / post-conflict societies.
- Lack of reference to reproductive rights.
- Why is this? Why is it important?
- Methods – content analysis of all Resolutions and National Action Plans of individual states.

Why reproductive rights?

- Reframing the concept of security – lack of access to legal, safe abortion results in insecurity for women.
- Accessing full citizenship and participation (Lister, 2003).
- Measuring commitments to gender equality in conflict transformation – ‘a crude but effective measure’ (Ni Aolain et al, 2011).
- Challenging conservative, essentialised visions of women – going beyond protection to rights (Shepherd, 2008).

The Resolutions

Resolution	Year	Reference to Reproductive Rights
1325	2000	No particular reference – ‘special needs of women and girls’
1820	2008	Focus on sexual violence
1889	2009	Participation
1888	2009	Sexual violence – ‘responsiveness to victims’
1960	2010	Sexual violence
2106	2013	Sexual violence and victims ‘assistance to survivors of sexual violence...including sexual and reproductive health’
2122	2013	Participation and women’s leadership
2422	2015	Women and countering violent extremism

National Action Plans

Country and Year	Mention of Reproductive Health	Mention of Abortion	Notes
Australia, 2012	M / NS	M	Mentions 'forced abortion'
Bosnia-Herzegovina [Revised, 2014-2017]	NM	NM	Much of NAP refs sexual violence and redress – no mention of abortion
France [Revised, 2015-2019]	M / S	NM	'...facilitate victims' access to health and sexual and reproductive rights.'
Mali, 2012	M / S	NM	'medical assistance for women with 'non-desired' pregnancies'
Uganda, 2008	NM	M	Mentions legal context of abortion restrictions – no actions
Sweden [Revised, 2016-2020]	M / S	NM	'...strengthen the opportunities for sexual and reproductive health and rights before, during and after conflicts.'

Discussion

- 2015 Global Review of 1325 – “Access to safe abortion and post-abortion care is a lifesaving part of comprehensive reproductive health care.” (77)
- CEDAW Recommendation 30
- Security Council permanent members stances on abortion.
- Political compromises on contentious issues.
- For the future - *How can we integrate abortion into the WPS agenda?*