

- d/ Other includes all non-military personnel contributed by Member States, including civilian police, electoral monitors and other specialist functions.
- e/ Selected years 1957, 1961, 1965, 1967, 1974, and 1979.
- f/ Selected years 1989, 1991, and 1992
- g/ Total for selected years listed in notes 5 and 6.

Source: Report of the statistical compilation of women in peace-keeping prepared by the United Nations Statistical Division for the second issue of The World's Women: Trends and Statistics, Statistical Division/DESIPA, STAT 321(a), United Nations, 29 March 1994.

Nevertheless, the situation is slowly beginning to change. Since 1970, the percentage of women in national militaries has been increasing slowly but steadily. Several countries now allow women to serve in combat roles, including Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United States, Venezuela and Zambia. Other countries have specific restrictions in combat zones.⁵ In regard to peace-keeping missions, a noticeable change finally came in the early 1990s in the Western Sahara operation (MINURSO), where women comprised 10.2 per cent of military personnel as of 1993 (see table 2, page 3). One possible explanation for the relatively high percentage of women is that a number of the troop-contributing Member States, including France, the United States and Australia, are nations with relatively higher proportions of women among their peace-keeping staffs. Another is the presence of a large medical unit in Western Sahara composed of mainly female nurses and doctors. In fact, a majority of women who serve in military peace-keeping missions still do so in non-combat roles.

A number of countries have actively recruited females into national peace-keeping forces. In 1979, Sweden first included women on an experimental basis. At that time, more than 4,000 women applied, and 42 were finally admitted.⁶ Among the 1,400 Swedes who currently serve in UN peace-keeping forces, the vast majority (90 per cent) serve in the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in the former Yugoslavia. Currently, 44 (3.3 per cent) out of the approximately 1,300 Swedish nationals serving in UNPROFOR are women. Twenty-one women serve as nurses and support staff in Bosnia-Herzegovina. In Macedonia, one Swedish woman serves in the military police, and five females are administrators. In Croatia, there is one woman professional military officer and a female reserve officer and 15 female administrators who serve in the peace-keeping forces. One Swedish female police officer served in Mozambique with ONUMOZ.⁷

In Sweden, women who have undergone basic military training may apply and are recruited on the same basis as men. Moreover, Swedish women without military training also have the opportunity to serve in UN peace-keeping forces overseas. They serve mainly in nursing, liaison, office and administration, mail and canteen functions. The 1994 Swedish national report submitted to the United Nations for the second review and appraisal of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies states that additional efforts should be made to raise the awareness of UN peace-keeping personnel regarding the vulnerable situation of women civilians in armed conflicts and suggests that an increase in the participation of women in UN peace-keeping operations would contribute to a better understanding of this problem.

Similarly, there has been a slight increase in women's participation in military peace-keeping missions at the initiative of other troop-contributing Member States. Of the more than 3,600 United States military personnel assigned to six UN peace-keeping missions, women have served in a variety of positions, including medical and administrative jobs, logistics and supply, military police and other occupations that are not traditional or combat-related.⁸

Table 2. Current Member States contributed personnel to UN peace-keeping