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A feminist local peace project?

An examination of Mexico's first National Action Plan on Women, Peace, and Security

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List of Acronyms

AVGM	Alert Mechanism for Gender Violence Against Women
AMLO	Andrés Manuel López Obrador
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
GEF	Generation Equality Forum
GNWP	Global Network of Women Peacebuilders
IACtHR	Inter-American Court of Human Rights
IR	International Relations
LAC	Latin America and the Caribbean
CECOPAM in Spanish	Mexico's Joint Training Centre for Peacekeeping Operations
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPs	National Action Plans
INMUJERES in Spanish	National Institute for Women
INEGI in Spanish	National Institute of Statistics and Geography
ENDIREH in Spanish	National Survey on the Dynamics of Relationships in Households
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OAS	Organisation of American States
FORTASEG in Spanish	Program for the Strengthening of Security
FAS in Spanish	Public Security Contribution Fund
RR	Relief and Recovery
SEDENA in Spanish	Secretariat of National Defence
SRE in Spanish	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs
SSPC in Spanish	Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection
SEMAR in Spanish	Secretariat of the Navy
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
UN	United Nations
UNPKO	United Nations Peacekeeping Operations
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
MUCPAZ in Spanish	Women Peacemakers
WPS-HA	Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action Compact
FOBAM in Spanish	Women's Welfare and Advancement Fund

Abstract

In 2021, the Mexican authorities presented its first National Action Plan (NAP) to Follow Up on the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security (WPS). By doing a content analysis and semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders that influenced the policymaking of the NAP, this Research Paper critically examines the development journey of the NAP and its composition. Using WPS post-colonial feminist lenses and critical feminist International Relations approaches, this investigation looks at the points at which Mexico's NAP innovates and fails in fulfilling the feminist activists' peace ambitions of UNSCR 1325 and provides evidence of why this is the case. Finally, this research concludes with recommendations for policymakers on what a more transformative NAP could look like to elevate WPS practice in Mexico.

Relevance to Development Studies

The Women Peace and Security Agenda (WPS), which emanates from the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and sister Resolutions, is the most dominant framework to incorporate a gender perspective in peace and security policy. The WPS is linked with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as both seek to achieve sustained peace. WPS adds to the advancement of Sustainable Development Goal 5 of "achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls" and Goal 16 of "promoting peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels" (WPS Focal Points, 2022). Policymakers popularised National Action Plans (NAPs) to operationalise WPS. These are "strategic roadmaps to further the implementation of the state's WPS policy and should hold actors accountable for their commitments" (Shepherd et al., 2020). This investigation navigates the journey toward designing Mexico's first NAP on the WPS agenda to understand its motivation and to make sense of how the government emulated this global framework on gender and peace to translate it to the local level. As NAPs constitute domestic public policies to address the gendered impacts of the security-development nexus, this investigation will add to promoting accountability, transparency, learning, and improved decision-making on WPS practice.

Keywords

Women, Peace and Security, National Action Plan, Mexico, Feminist Peace, Foreign Policy

Chapter 1: Positionality

Location of the researcher

The researcher is me, Dinorah Arceta. I am a cis heterosexual mestiza young woman who was born in Mexico City. I am part of the 26% of women aged 25-34 in Mexico with a higher education degree and the first woman in my family to study for a master's programme (OECD, 2021). I am the first woman in my maternal and paternal families who had access to a postgraduate degree. I hold urban privilege as I used to live in Cuauhtémoc, a neighbourhood which ranks fourth locally and fifth nationally, with the highest human development index in Mexico (UNDP, 2019). My father inherited me a middle high-class status and a background on "prieto/brown" imposed race.

My "social capital" facilitated me to conduct this research in a Global North academic university, where I was granted a partial scholarship. The coloniality of knowledge influenced my engagement with research generation. I had always studied in private universities which promote western and Eurocentric ways of research.

Regarding ideological positionalities, I have an affinity towards ethics of care, postcolonial, anti-militarism and anti-racist feminisms. Regarding political affiliations, I am a member of the feminist Mexican collective called Internacional Feminista. It conducts investigations around my research topic.

The subject under investigation

I selected my research topic based on a particular field that will favour my professional goal of becoming an "expert" on Gender, Peace, and Security. I acknowledge this career aspiration might fuel the political economy of knowledge production. I am a mestiza that had not experienced extreme gendered violence in Mexico but aspires to become an "authority" on the subject with this paper.

Relation with research participants

I got relatively easy access to the interview participants due to past professional encounters in the diplomatic and gender sectors. I used past bonds for my research. Although I asked "objective" questions during the interviews, I tried not to compromise the relations for networking management purposes.

I recognise the cultural context and ideological positions of the interviewer and the interviewee impact the research. My outsider role relies upon the fact that I have not been in the WPS sector in Mexico. I have yet to gain experience developing or implementing WPS activities. All I know is from a distance. My insider role is minimal: the NAP is a policy from my country of origin.

Regarding the interviews, I created a space that allows "collective active participation" rather than one controlled by the researcher, which prompts confrontation (Potts and Brown, 2005). I minimised issues of not portraying accurate participants' perspectives by maintaining communication with them. Still, my interpretation of their sayings was influenced by my ideological positionality of the postcolonial, anti-militarism and anti-racist feminisms critiques of the WPS.

Chapter 2: Introduction

This Research Paper is interested in scrutinising public efforts to translate gendered global norms to the "local" level. In early 2021, the Mexican government launched its *National Action Plan (NAP) to Follow Up on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace, and Security* (SRE, 2021). The plan is the result of an interagency effort of the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE), the Secretariat of National Defence (SEDENA) (ministry composed of the Army and the Air Force), the Secretariat of the Navy (SEMAR), the Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection (SSPC) and the National Institute for Women (INMUJERES). The National Action Plan (NAP) aims to "promote the full, substantive and equal participation of women at all levels and areas, including security, and to highlight their role and contributions as actors in peace-building and peace-keeping, conflict prevention and repairing the social fabric" (SRE, 2022).

The investigation intends to unpack the political factors that influenced the Mexican government to implement the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and follow it through a NAP. The case of Mexico's NAP is essential in two main aspects. Firstly, the country has high standards to fulfil, given its growing international recognition due to its adoption of a "Feminist" Foreign Policy and the efforts to deal with historical contradictions of promoting women's rights abroad while coping with extreme gender-based violence at home. Secondly, while the localisation of gendered global norms like the WPS has gained attention among Mexican diplomats since long ago, less attention has been paid to it in the armed force. Military power and influence have grown exponentially in Mexico's public affairs recently. This research provides a clear understanding of UNSCR 1325 in Mexican national policymaking.

This document revises the content of the NAP to see if it is respectful of the feminist activist ambition that lobbied for the approval of UNSCR 1325 for demasculinising international security. Similarly, this research reflects on how to construct feminist localisations of the WPS that are comprehensive. The scope of the analysis starts from 2000, when the UNSCR 1325 was adopted, to June 2022, the day of the publication of the one-year implementation report of the NAP. Semi-structured interviews with NAP stakeholders and policy content analysis were employed to collect data. Critical feminist International Relations (IR) theories, such as Postcolonial feminisms and the Political Economy of Sexual Violence, are used as theoretical and conceptual frameworks to interpret the data collected.

Only three think tank investigations have addressed Mexico's NAP. Philipson and Velasco (2021) assessed NAP content in their policy brief. Barranco (2021) evaluated the viability of the NAP through the Situation, Task, Action, and Result model. Drumond et al., (2022) compared Mexico's NAP with other NAPs from the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region. This paper adds to the NAP literature from an academic perspective. It revises not only its content but also its origins. The NAP is revised as an outcome of a political process rather than a technical policy document. This research aims to attract those who follow WPS's progress in the Global South, particularly in LAC.

2.1 Research questions

Main question

- 1) How did *Mexico's National Action Plan to Follow Up on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security* incorporate the global Women, Peace, and Security norms into the domestic context?

Sub questions

- 1.1) Why did President Andrés Manuel López Obrador's administration develop a *National Action Plan to Follow Up on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace, and Security*?
- 1.2) What are the areas of opportunities present in *Mexico's National Action Plan to Follow Up on the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace, and Security* to achieve its objective of promoting “substantive participation of women as real and effective actors in conflict prevention at all levels” (SRE, 2021)?
- 1.3) How do critical feminist debates on the localisation of NAP help advance the discussions and implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Mexico?

Chapter 3: Theoretical framework

3.1 Background

3.1.1 An overview of the Women, Peace and Security architecture and National Action Plans

The WPS, established with the passing of the UNSCR 1325 in 2000 and subsequent instruments of a similar name, is acknowledged as the most relevant framework for advancing gender equality in conflict transformation, peacebuilding, and security governance (Shepherd et al., 2020). Initially, the WPS agenda aimed to achieve the following goals: inclusion of women in peace negotiations, developing of indicators and measuring outcomes of women's representation in security institutions, reducing the weaponisation of sexual violence in armed conflict, and access to justice for victims of sexual violence (ibid). However, in its more than 20 years of existence, the WPS expanded. The WPS is now an architecture where many actors shape the everyday decision-making of the gendered impacts of insecurity and conflict at the international, national, and local levels.

The WPS keeps on strengthening in terms of priorities and actors and its practice and theorisation. Initially, critical actors featured in the agenda were the UN Security Council (UNSC), International Organisations and Global North civil society members. Now grassroots feminist movements, sub-national actors, the private sector, peacebuilders, and academics are engaging with it too. They participate in multiple ways, causing the WPS to be a space for power relations. This paper sees a dynamic understanding of the WPS agenda, viewing it as a political and contentious process discussed with international actors and inside states.

Regarding its thematic scope, evolving from a focus on traditional armed conflict, the WPS priorities enlarged. It now applies to gendered security-development challenges like citizen security, transnational justice, and climate change. Similarly, the WPS practice has expanded. The growing interest in the WPS spiked ideas on translating its main pillars created in the international arena into ground-in-field operations and peacebuilding processes, formally framed as WPS localisation. In 2002, UNSC authorities encouraged Member States to issue National Action Plans (NAPs) as a core means of strengthening the implementation of UNSCR 1325 (Barrow, 2016).

In 2005, Denmark was the first state to come out with a NAP; since then, 103 countries have done the same (WPS Focal Points Network, 2022). With more than seven years of experience, the NAP tendency keeps growing. Some countries even updated the first version of their NAP, building on the work and lessons learned from previous plans. These plans had popularised because they enumerate concrete steps by policymakers to accomplish actionable changes, which allow monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL).

The WPS plan trend has elements in common such as alignment with national gender equality policies and following the pillars that the UN Secretary-General recommended in its first Report on WPS: prevention, protection, relief, and recovery. Nevertheless, some countries

have taken very different approaches to the NAP structure. While some include details regarding budget, actions, implementing actors, timeline, budget, and learning and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, others do not (WILPF, 2022). Regarding priorities, NAPs tend to have diverse topics that reflect how countries localise and translate the global WPS norms.

LAC is underrepresented in NAPs adopted, with only nine NAPs representing 8.79% of all NAPs adopted worldwide (WPS Focal Points Network, 2022). Chile was the first LAC country to present a NAP in 2008. After that, the following LAC countries that issued NAPs were Argentina, Brazil, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, Mexico, Paraguay, and Uruguay (ibid). Drumond and Rebelo (2020) argue that the common element in LAC NAPs is their emphasis on the armed forces "diplomatic engagement in UN peace operations". The lack of Latin American impetus owes to the "lack of awareness about how the WPS agenda can be of benefit to women and girls in the region, with debates around the relevance and applicability of NAPs confined to the domain of a few specialised think tanks, scholars, and civil society actors" (ibid).

In the following chapters, this investigation revises Mexico's engagement with the WPS agenda. It was until 2021 that the country demonstrated its highest commitment to WPS localisation by adopting its first NAP. Given the NAP trend, it was puzzling why Mexico took so long to develop NAP despite its pioneering international contribution towards gender equality reaching a peak with its adoption of a Feminist Foreign Policy in 2020.

3.1.2 Debates and critiques around the Women, Peace, and Security agenda

In the 22 years of implementation, the WPS has aroused critiques and discussions regarding its theory and practice. While some saw UNSCR 1325 as a "significant normative change" with gender transformational horizons, others urged recognising its conceptual and institutional limitations with gender and political and gender tropes risks (NíAoláin and Valji, 2019). This chapter summarises these debates and asks to acknowledge that these discussions underpin the "understanding of global gender and security governance" (Basu, 2016).

WPS criticism in terms of its practice owes to the empirical evidence that it has not accomplished its objectives. There is a gap between countries' commitments and the reality faced on the ground. WPS's central pillar about women's participation in security policy has not been achieved. In the case of Mexico. As of 2019, SEDENA reported the presence of 28,231 women in the Mexican Army and Air Force, equivalent to 13.1% of the total number of active members. These figures contrast with those of 2018 and 2016, years in which the percentage of women in the SEDENA was 11.8% and 5.8%, respectively (López et al., 2020). WPS's failure comes from its lack of enforcement; given its international origins, its implementation path is up to the states' discretion (Aroussi, 2017).

Most UN member states demonstrated commitment to the WPS by developing NAPs. As of 2022, 103 out of 193 member states had issued one (WPS Focal Points, 2022). Nevertheless, this is not a synonym for tangible change. In LAC, some states have taken steps to advance the WPS by developing a NAP or incorporating gender provisions in peace agreements in the region. Still, the zone experiences major gendered security issues. According

to the OAS, "domestic violence is one of the principal problems facing the region" (2008). Domestic violence affects 25% and 50% of women (ibid).

Regarding WPS theory contestations, these emerged from the policy disconnection from the analytical depth. WPS has been accused of narrowing gender to women. Plus, depoliticisation from its original feminist political project nature (Datta, 2004). The advocates behind the drafting of the UNSCR 1325 were explicitly against "making war safe for women" as they were abolitionists of militarism and weapons (Shepherd, 2016). Nevertheless, the WPS has become a "government-led enterprise that mostly involves political, military and academic elites, making it susceptible to cooptation and alien" (Drumond et al., 2022).

The WPS pillar of reducing Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) in conflict has been framed as the most urgent because it "threatens international peace and security" (Merger, 2016). However, it appeals to the notion of women needing to be saved, promoting their status as victims without agency. Hostilities have affected women differently in SGBV (Hilhorst et al., 2018). However, other structural issues have been strategically forgotten by the "fetishisation" of SGBV in war (Meger, 2016). In Mexico, one of the most urgent insecurity issues is homicides perpetrated with firearms, in which the most affected group are men between 15 to 35 years old (INEGI, 2021). In 2021, 22,081 men were killed with firearms, whereas in the case of women, 2,313 murders were registered (ibid).

According to Haastrup and Hagen (2021), WPS theorisation and praxis reflect exploitative historical relations between the West and non-West. Paradoxically, NAPs' "beneficiaries" tend to be Global South women and girls, yet most of WPS's decision-makers, advocates, and scholars are from Global North. In the view of Aroussi (2017), the expertise that influences the UNSCR 1325 is the West, yet NAPs tend to disregard the local agency of peacebuilding actors. WPS's foremost defenders are West actors due to their intention of reproducing an international liberal order and their way of envisioning peace and gender (ibid). West NAPs usually only target armed conflict outside its borders. Aroussi (2017) argues it is to "involve what West can do in other countries rather than what they have failed to do at home".

In contrast, others stand with the WPS for its radical origins. It was lobbied by activists that aimed for the abolition of military expenditure and the political economy of war. WPS advocates argue that its weaknesses owe to the fact that it mostly "sits within overlapping architectures within the UN system", so they call to recapture (NíAoláin and Valji, 2019). In their vision, WPS have a transformational potential that can be attained by contesting the multiple critiques and moving away from the technical exercise of ticking boxes on the number of NAPs and the number of women in the armed forces (ibid).

To summarise, the WPS agenda is a space of interaction of power relations of various actors, such as academia and diplomats. The subsequent chapters unpack how Mexico's NAP responds to this WPS debates.

3.2 Theorisation

This research understands feminism in multiple ways. It can be both theory and praxis aiming to transform unequal power relationships between genders. At the same time, feminism can be

an intellectual machinery for unjust knowledge creation. Feminism can be social and political movements calling for social justice from gendered experiences. There is no single feminism, but many. Feminists' activists, politicians and scholars come from various locations and positionalities and conceptualise and expand meanings, doing and ways.

3.2.1 Postcolonial feminisms in International Relations

This research employs Postcolonial feminisms in IR as theories. It acknowledges the heterogeneity and unpredictability of experiences of international political and social life. It pays attention to the historical differences between the West and non-West and the inequalities within these latitudes and temporalities. A key standout of postcolonial feminism is their opposition to universalism because it is a "discursive violence that writes out histories and mutes voices" (Parashar, 2016). Prominent scholars like Mohanty (1988) and Parashar (2016) theorised how the state, through foreign policy, disseminates the image of "Third World Women", reinforcing gender, colonial and racial categorisations.

Postcolonial feminist academics challenge the state and international arena as spaces to achieve equality for the marginalised. This supports "the production and the vulneralisation of the gendered subaltern" (ibid). In the case of the WPS, Basu and Pratt criticise the authority of the West over the agenda. In precarity and conflict, women's exercise of agency is limited, and they have no option but to accept the will of the state. Co-optation occurs through national/cultural symbols like identity politics and reproducing the state's tool like the WPS. Postcolonial feminists highlight that when instrumentalisation happens, there is counterinsurgency (ibid).

Feminist academics contend that when states have gender equality as a national interest, they often brag about the superiority of their liberal and democratic ideology over the radical and reformist view of "other" voices. Through a civilising mission, liberal states promote their gender equality recipe; notably, there is much pressure from governments, neoliberal international organisations, and private sector interest to correct women "abroad". Basu (2016) argues that there is a "conceptual gap whereby the distance between the ambiguous language of UNSCR 1325 and the specific need at the local level remains uncharted". Imperialism can occur if the WPS discourse is forced on women, especially if it is expected that UNSCR 1325 is compatible with the local peacebuilding ways and doings through localisation efforts (ibid).

This feminism evaluates the harmful IR arrangements that open doors to political violence in postcolonial settings. This scholarship documents the imbrications of patriarchal and imperial relations in current times. They identify how armed conflict and extreme violence in non-West contexts are core aspects of the capitalist system. To Das, violence is an "everydayness" in postcolonial contexts (cited in Parashar, 2016). The normality of violence is due to the lack of clear distinction between the victim, perpetrator, and witness. Hegemonic standards dictate who is "weak/feminised" vs who is "strong/masculinised" (ibid). The weak/feminised states are nations where violence occurs and need rescue. These binaries ultimately reproduce asymmetric relations between the core and periphery based on problematising the "fragile" state's masculinity (ibid).

Finally, this research uses postcolonial feminism because it builds bridges for political transitions. In the search for policy solutions, this investigation hopes to bring "epistemic compassion towards Others" (ibid). Postcolonial feminists have imaginations on how to find an equilibrium between "Westphalia's power politics" and the various worlds that arise from embodied experiences. If open discussions of power and statehood occur, injustice and erasure can happen (ibid).

3.2.2 Political Economy of Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict

This research is inspired by the work of Meger et al. (2016) on the *Political Economy of Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict*. This book challenges the "rape as a weapon of war paradigm" commonly present in the WPS. A feminist political economy analysis identifies social, political, and economic networks that use SGVB. Similarly, it examines why actors employ SGVB and how the international community responds.

According to Meger (2016), SGVB occurs due to "local gender norms and socialisation; neoliberal globalisation; and the global political economy of armed conflict". Feminist political economists observe why certain groups utilise SGVB during the war and how this is connected to socioeconomic processes. These academics also look at local and international processes that sustain the weaponisation of SGVB.

This theory urges us to discharge the myths surrounding SGVB in low livelihood, insecurity and extreme violence settings that maintain vivid the "expansion of the security paradigm with the potential for responding to and preventing a range of military and nonmilitary threats to women" (ibid). Although initially well-intentioned, the WPS has been claimed to be highly militarised and beneficial for Western liberal states' interests in intervening in other states. Feminist political economists question the discourse of exceptionality and securitisation of SGVB. Fetishisation from international actors in SGVB in conflict silences the "contextually specific and culturally determined bases of sexual violence perpetrated", allowing "strategic and instrumental sexual violence be considered graver than everyday rape and civilian-perpetrated sexual aggressions" (ibid).

Transactions of power in the international political economy, like the sexual division of labour and hypercapitalism, add to the use of SGVB in conflict. A hierarchical gendered order survives out of the necessity to accumulate wealth. Capitalism sustains the "patriarchal man-woman relations" (ibid). In a setting like Mexico, it is possible to see the economically motivated violence that keeps racialised males out of formal employment and only finds material rewards in violence. For these populations, options are reduced to "idealised forms of masculinity", such as organised crime and the armed forces. These institutions are based on gender hierarchies, pillage, and exploitation. Both use them as "cannon fodder" with the promise of social mobility by sustaining their income and better social status. However, armed groups request a demonstration of the idealised characteristics of masculinity, such as physical dominance and sexual virility.

3.3 Concepts

This paper uses three concepts related to the WPS: gender, peace, and security, from a feminist standpoint. This research tries to add the challenging endeavour of disaggregating security, peace, and gender as concepts in and of themselves while highlighting the difficulties of separating one from the other (Swaine, 2019). All these concepts and theories inform the interpretation of the data to answer the research questions.

3.3.1 Gender

This research utilises gender as lenses to understand how it is portrayed in the WPS and Mexico's NAP. This study conceptualises gender as an analytical category and as power relations. Gender is interlaced with structures such as racism, coloniality, capitalism etc. Gender in IR challenges the dichotomy between universalism and cultural relativism, situating to broader regional and international systems and processes (Hudson, 2005).

Gender functions as a vivid conceptual instrument. Gender allows us to perceive women and men as identity groups one behind another (but not correspondently). Related to WPS, security is understood as gendered. Femininity is automatically linked to masculinity. Gender as an analytical tool interrogates our conception of women's security and alters our notion of men's security (ibid). Critical feminist meanings of security, as in gender as power relations, appreciate women's security and men's (ibid). This approach also sees security as the end of violence and asymmetric ties, highlighting the gendered representations of security (ibid).

Gender, from the critical feminist IR perspective, is a social construction. It changes over time and space, permitting women and sexual/gender diversity emancipation (Tickner in Hudson, 2005). Feminist IR confronts essentialisms and hierarchical binaries, such as international and national, victim and perpetrator, and global governance vs national sovereignty. Then, this scholarship sees security as non-neutral and non-state centric. Security as gendered is related to the individual level, meaning subjectivity. Security through the lens of feminisms is an everyday experience (ibid).

3.3.2 Security from Feminist Security Studies

This research advocates for a reconceptualisation of security. This paper understands security through the lenses of critical feminist IR and Feminist Security Studies scholars that link security with the *violence continuum* (Cockburn, 2004).

According to mainstream IR theory, security is understood in state, unitary and sovereign terms (Shepherd, 2016). Security serves the state in the sense that it provides protection. Security practice looks at strengthening the protection of the state, whereas security theory looks at how to enhance state security. Security threats, like interstate conflict, compromise the survival of the nation-state. This approach is discharged from this research since it misses the "multiple and overlapping hierarchical relationships of power that undermine human dignity and capabilities" (True and Tanyag, 2019).

From the critical feminist view, addressing insecurity translates to paying attention to how resources, rewards, privileges, and power are distributed and used according to established relations of production and reproduction in the household and international society (True in True and Tanyag, 2019). Feminists highlight the need to focus on "immediate or emergency humanitarian assistance and long-term socioeconomic development" simultaneously, not only when issues become securitised or attached to a crisis (ibid). A discourse of exception ultimately increases the state's coercive power. Military approaches to security are at the expense of "civil rights in responding to national security threats via its projected image of the patriarchal provider...within and outside of its borders", which reproduce gender and racial hierarchies (ibid).

The level and intensity of violence in Mexico challenge dominant approaches to security, like Liberal Peace Theory. According to this scholarship, achieving peace means promoting international security, prioritising rational self-interest, strengthening democracy, installing a republic system, and welcoming marketisation and free trade (Doyle, 2005). Mexico has a long history of democratic institutions, republicanism and opening to the neoliberal process, and still, it deals with a disturbance inside its border (Correa, 2019). Multiple manifestations of violence beset Mexico. According to Pereva:

dramatised deaths related to organised crime and drug cartels; state-sponsored militia and paramilitary organisations going after groups that oppose the implementation of neoliberal policies (for example environmentalists, human rights organisations); gender-based violence in public spaces, in the domestic sphere, and associated with illegal human trafficking and sex slavery; physical abuse and homicide against people with non-conforming sex-gender expressions, particularly trans women and gay men; common crime and public insecurity, all of which have permeated Mexico's daily life (in Martínez-Guzmán, 2019).

These multiple forms of violence feed each other and overlap nonlinearly; thus, it is not appropriate to interpret them as isolated issues (ibid). Violence is "a time-based one, where the line of continuity is between phases of peace and conflict (pre-war, war-fighting, peace-making, and post-war)" (Cockburn, 2004). Critical feminist IR urges to think of security outside of the "binary logics that sever the interconnectedness of various political, economic, and socio-cultural insecurities from the individual to the community, the state and global society" (True and Tanyag, 2019).

3.3.3 Peace from Critical Feminist Theories

This research conceptualises peace from various feminist theories. This paper asks how feminist peace would be anchored in the WPS policy in Mexico through a NAP. Feminist peace researchers study the gender injustice perpetrated in peacekeeping, international security politics and gender equality where the WPS tends to rest.

In the search for emancipation and justice in the context of structural oppression and violence, feminist peace and feminist resistance hold hands, and it is visible in academia, policy, and activism. In the West, women's peace activism became noticeable during the first Women's Peace Congress in 1915, which defined principles for a just war settlement (Tickner, 2019). These standards emphasised that SGVB and civilians were affected by warfare; women's valuable input for peacemaking; and the aim to construct what the women name as "positive peace," meaning a peace that combines social justice with the end of hostilities (ibid).

Critical feminist IR scholars from the West started to theorise about peace around the 1980s (ibid). They argued that the state-dominated and institutionalised mechanisms for peace focus on a "militarised and securitised conception of peace" (ibid). Feminist peace academics dispute the traditional view of peace because it obscures the responsibility of the Global North in sustaining and igniting conflicts, as well as the racial and gender hierarchies that underpin global inequities, hindering peace. Despite the legacy of WPS originating from feminist transnational activism, it has been translated in ways that strengthen the status quo rather than dismantle global power structures like the political economy of war.

Whilst peace is unquestionably a universal aim, it does not adhere to a single interpretation, definition, or phenomenon. Feminist peace is not a "fixed and monolithic" concept. Feminism and peace do not have a "shared set of philosophical, ethical, cultural or political interests among all women" (Smith and Yoshida, 2022). Critical and postcolonial feminist thinkers widened our comprehension of peace. In these theorisations, peace and security are relational. Both are attached by "structural equalities, harmony with a sustained ecosystem, community participation and existence, and a freedom to choose" (ibid). Security and peace are free from the various manifestations of violence and injustice. Critical feminisms take as a central element of peace that "economic rights, land rights, social rights, racial and gender justice" are ensured and the dismantling of militarism (ibid).

To summarise, feminist peace means seeking radical changes that unravel tangled webs of violence and insecurity beyond what is defined as conflict, post-conflict, and unstable settings. Feminist peace is "taking women's lives seriously" and addressing their recorded calls (Enloe, in ibid). Feminist peace can move forward when there is care, truth, remedy, and healing. Finally, it can be achieved when relational and vulnerable elements of human beings and everyday mundane living practices are respected.

3.3.4 Gendered security and Development nexus

This research aspires to break with narrowed visions of how gender intersects with security and Development. This paper analyses how the NAP understands this and translates them into policy. In the view of this paper, the theorisation of critical feminist IR and, most notably, the work of Hudson (2012) helps us imagine what a transformational policy to address the *Gender Consequences of Linking Security and Development* looks like.

Hudson (2012) warns that liberal peace and liberal feminist standpoints monopolise the current programme interventions targeted at reducing gender injustice in the context of insecurity, conflict and precarity. Hudson argues that liberal doctrines interpret Development, security, and gender equality as circular (ibid). Liberal thinking infers that SGVB is a manifestation of insecurity with implications for the well-being of people. And at the same time, the security and Development sectors call for increasing women's presence to become less violent. Then for liberal policymakers, the path to resolving these three issues is a "dilemma exclusively reserved for the women's domain" (ibid). This approach exaggerates individual differences and curtails power imbalances at the institutional or structural level. It misses the re-existing power structures based on gender or other factors and the culture of violence that might permeate societies with low access to essential services or when in conflict. Similarly, it forgets

the SGVB occurring in peacetime and at the private level. Besides, it disregards the lack of trust in the security forces and justice system and the unequal redistribution of power and resources.

Hudson urges to confront policies that expect women's presence in the security sector to influence the organisational environment and make them more democratic. The relationship between gender and power is downgraded, and gender-based violence and violence against women are regularly mixed up. Liberal feminist approach essentialise women's and men's roles in violence and underdevelopment. Instead, Hudson (2012) recommends intersectionality because it "allows space for individual identity constructions and structural and cultural analyses". The goal should be to ensure gender emancipation and peace, acknowledging that when structural factors such as racism, xenophobia, aporophobia, etc, intersect with identity and power, some people become more vulnerable than others.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Overview of the Methodology

This research uses qualitative approaches to gather evidence since it identifies interests, events and frameworks that influenced Mexico's first NAP development. It evaluates its content's assumptions and describes its areas of opportunities. The methodology comprises two methods: semi-structured interviews and NAP content analysis. Based on the data interpretation, the research formulates findings proved mainly with words.

The primary data was obtained through the answers of the interview participants. The second data was gathered by analysis from academic papers, books, journals, and studies of the WPS, gender-security-development nexus, Mexican foreign policy and Conflict and Peace studies, as well as civil society, international organisations, and think-thanks reports or research about NAPs or WPS. Similarly, reviewing speeches, press releases, policy documents, public databases, or surveys from officials or government bodies.

4.2 National Action Plan Content Analysis

This research employs a combination of the following methods to analyse NAP's content: *High-Impact NAP guide* (Jacevic, 2019); Fritz et al. (2011); Miller et al. (2014); Drummond and Rebelo (2020) and Shepherd et al. (2020). These methods start with a brief description of the policy history of the NAP design, followed by a summary of the document's structure. These analyses unpack how the NAP content translates the global and regional WSP norms to the national context in the objectives/goals and the actions, paying particular attention to the theoretical understanding of peace and gender. Then they proceed to identify NAP standouts or fallouts through comparative analysis. This research followed these indicators and examined the areas of opportunity of Mexico's NAP in terms of design, budget, coordination, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation.

4.3 Semi-structured Interviews

This research conducted semi-structured interviews to collect information about NAP development that the content analysis could not provide. This method was carried out to gain access to the public officer responsible for putting together the NAP and other factors that influence WPS policymaking in Mexico. The twelve interviews provided about the NAP that is not available for public release (Richards, 2016). Interview participants helped situate the context of the NAP drafting and the political motives behind it.

The interviews conducted for this research were semi-structured, meaning that while an interview guide was developed and used for all the interviews (see Appendice II: Generic semi-structured questionnaire), some questions were adapted to each participant depending on their role and engagement with each pillar of the NAP. The main goal was to gain access to the NAP's Inter-Agency Group, composed of members of SRE, SEDENA, SEMAR, SSPC, INMUJERES and UN Women, which was achieved. Other vital actors were invited to participate NGOs,

academia and think tanks that work on the WPS in Mexico (complete list available in Appendix I: List of semi-structured interview participants).

All interviews were held online through the Microsoft Teams for one hour and were conducted in Spanish. The twelve interviews supported (and sometimes challenged) the information examined through the policy content analysis method. All interviewees signed an Information and consent form; however, some requested anonymity for security purposes.

4.4 Limitations

This research encountered literature constraints as well as logistic limitations. Most of the literature revised for the study comes from the Global North and is written in English, even though the subject (NAP) is from Mexico. This reproduces the WPS's political economy of knowledge production where West and privileged academia have economic benefits over the rest. A technical limitation while conducting the interviews was the virtual format. On some occasions, there were connectivity issues. To solve this, some participants turned their cameras, so some non-verbal clues were missed.

Chapter 5: Mexico's government engagement with the Women Peace and Security agenda finalising in a National Action Plan

In mainstream IR, the "two-level game" theory is an analytical approach that explains the synergy between national politics and foreign policy. For Postcolonial feminism in IR, there is a focus on how authorities interact synchronously at the international, state, and local levels, attempting to domestic elite acceptance and struggling to account for the West liberal state's interests. Special attention to how foreign policy promotes "hegemonic relations of exploitation between the West and non-West" (Parashar, 2016). This research argues that the progression of the WPS in global politics, Mexico's foreign policy interests in the WPS, favourable institutional arrangements on gender mainstreaming and a change in civil-military relations enabled the Mexican government to implement the UNSCR 1325 and follow it through a NAP. All this demonstrates the Mexican diplomatic and military elite's allegiance to the liberal world order.

5.1 Progression of the Women, Peace, and Security agenda in global politics

The international political context embraces "normative commitments to gender equality" (Basu, 2016). The discourse about reducing gender gaps has never been so prevalent, and whoever is against it is seen as backward (Thomson and Whiting, 2022). Women's issues are a source of authority within the international society that calls for participation (ibid). Basu (2016) argues that growing attention to WPS originated from the states' tendency to place "gender as a national interest". Women's issues have increasingly become pivotal in some countries' foreign actions. At least 12 countries, including Mexico, incorporated feminist values as guiding foreign policy principles.

Regarding the WPS, it emanated formally within the UNSC, which keeps a dominant position in global politics. WPS fits fine for countries with or aiming for recognition as "protagonists in decision-making processes concerning international security" (Rossone, 2019). The WPS is attractive even among "anti-gender" states like Poland and Brazil because it relies on militarised action over political solving (Thomson & Whiting, 2022). In the name of safety for women, WPS uses "conventional colonial logic of security permitting the use of lethal force in service of the state, binding security to the state and its territorial integrity" (Shepherd in Basu and Shepherd, 2020).

UNSC would only have adopted 1325 if it provided political benefits to its permanent members. As a thematic area of the UNSC, WPS facilitates states' lead resolutions and organising open debates. For P5 and Global North, WPS discourse on "saving women" justified conflict interventions and integrated humanitarian action (Basu, 2016). For non-permanent members and Global South, WPS serves as foreign aid recipients and contributors to international security through UN Peacekeeping (UNPKO), in which the UNSC determines deployments (UNSC, 2022).

Reinforcing the commitment to WPS can be made through a NAP. Adopting a NAP is seen as a sign of Development. The NAP enactment trend also owes influential WPS supporters to promote it, like the UN Secretary-General and NATO. WPS legitimises Western liberal institutions' interference abroad and the political economy of knowledge production as they export their best practices and experience (Aroussi, 2017). To illustrate, UN Women had a significant role in Mexico's NAP. A NAP grants symbolic power (Thomson and Whiting, 2022). Having a NAP enables states to engage in the liberal world order while doing the minimum work to reduce gender injustice at home (ibid).

5.2 Women, Peace, and Security agenda as a Mexican foreign policy interest

This research demonstrates that NAP is a foreign policy tool for Mexican diplomats. This chapter details how the NAP helps the foreign policy goal of growing "acceptance and support from the powerful Western liberal States", which is much needed to have a compelling slot as a relevant actor in global politics (Aroussi, 2017). SRE developed the NAP late compared to other LAC countries, waiting to issue it when it served the most for abroad purposes. It did not implicate substantial institutional redoing nationally. Mexican foreign policy does not tend to change radically but is a gradual construction process of small steps in one direction (Zepeda, 2016).

5.2.1 Mexico's participation in the UN Security Council setting the ground for the National Action Plan

At the beginning of the XXI Century, a change curve happened in the international arena (Hampson and Heinbecker, 2011). New power configurations allowed developing countries to play an active role in global politics (ibid). In Mexico, diplomats redesigned the foreign policy to adapt to global changes and to deal with the domestic political "alternation" after the fall of the hegemonic party system headed by the Institutional Revolutionary Party, which held power for more than 70 years. Foreign policymakers opened Mexico to international scrutiny and aimed for Mexico to be a "responsible actor on the global stage, an institution builder, and adherent to the rules system.... concerned -and busy- with the best causes of humanity" (Ruiz, 2022).

Diplomats wanted Mexico to gain credibility as a liberal democracy instead of a developing country. To do that, they considered Mexico to amplify its role in multilateral organisations, as these are essential instruments of international relations (Hovet in Rossone de Paula, 2016). An emphasis on multilateralism also responded to Mexico's complicated relationship with its intimidating neighbour USA, with whom it had ups and downs throughout history, limiting its actions on the world stage (Ruiz, 2022).

Mexico has advocated for "soft power" topics at the multilateral level. Article 89 of its constitution states that foreign policy should be grounded in principles that promote the "protection and defence of human rights" and "peaceful settlement of the conflict" in alignment with the UN Charter. This orientation allowed Mexico to build a trajectory in promoting women's rights, which later materialised in adopting a Feminist Foreign Policy in 2020. Mexico hosted feminists worldwide in 1975 during the World Conference on Women, which grounded

the creation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, one of the most relevant frameworks on women's empowerment. Mexico's foreign policy principles also served the country to cement leadership in facilitating peace negotiation processes. Name a few examples: Mexico had an outstanding role in the Chapultepec Peace Accords in 1992. Mexico has supported the negotiations between the Venezuelan government and the Unitary Platform of Venezuela since 2021.

Although Mexico has an outstanding record in multilateral policymaking, particularly in mediation and women's rights, the country does not stand out as a "hard power" protagonist. The Mexican foreign policy principles include safeguarding non-intervention, national sovereignty, and self-determination. These cornerstones were embedded constitutionally during the Cold War to protect Mexico from imperialist tendencies of declaring one government legitimate while refusing to recognise another (Groen, 2011). While these were useful in the past, absenteeism and nationalism brought a risk of isolation. For Mexico to "participate in international affairs as a powerful player", diplomats reevaluated Mexico's adherence to the non-intervention and bid for the country to have a seat on the UNSC (Rossone de Paula, 2016). A non-permanent membership at the UNSC feeds diplomats' desire for Mexico to have this new identity of a "respectable" world actor filling Western liberal states' standards about what a "strong country" should be and do (ibid).

As the diplomatic position was based on mediation and, at some point in history, defending the Third World against imperialism, Mexico distanced discursively from having a say in military interference for securing congruence. Instead, Mexico has had a pragmatic approach to justify its participation in UNSC among nationalistic groups that still resembles the non-intervention doctrine. The main messages for Mexico's presence in UNSC are the country's contributions to "promoting sustainable peace" and "humanitarian aid for the benefit of the population" (SRE, 2021). Mexico's priorities for membership in 2021-2022 are non-confrontative topics such as "protecting civilians and vulnerable people...and the WPS" (ibid).

WPS opened opportunities for Mexico to honour its "historical multilateralist conviction and a genuine national interest in making the UN works for everyone" whilst having visibility in a thematic issue in the UNSC (ibid). Being the only country with a Feminist Foreign Policy made it easy for Mexico to co-chair, together with Ireland and Kenya, the Informal Expert Group on WPS at the UNSC. Mexico promoted commitments to "gender balance among briefers invited to the UNSC, including both UN system briefers and civil society" (Norway, 2022).

Nationalist elites that defend Mexico's non-intervention tradition are somewhat not triggered by the WPS because it is "firmly located within the boundaries of countries that have experienced armed conflicts" (Aroussi, 2017). Mexico does not have an internationally recognised conflict, so it would not be subject to harsh external inquiry for lack of 1325 implementation back home. Moreover, WPS exalts Mexico's role as a "middle power" that saves racialised women's bodies from being used as a weapon of war (ibid).

Instrumentalising WPS has been challenging at home for Mexican diplomats. Some NGOs and academia claim that Mexico experiences non-international armed conflict (CMDPDH, 2019). Furthermore, Mexico is facing extreme gender-based violence, damaging the country's credibility as a feminist ally. For compliance, diplomats drafted a NAP before taking office at the UNSC in 2021. Adopting a NAP is the "highest commitment" of states towards

WPS. SRE invested in what Peck identifies as a "follow-the-leader" emulation model to manifest responsibility and coherence to the WPS, through which countries embrace internationally recognised practices like NAPs for authoritative security actors to identify them as credible gender-like-minded peers (Drummond and Rebelo, 2020). Even though NAP was a pragmatic move to reiterate Mexico's pledge to WPS and to reduce criticism, it was also a result of following a regional trend of linking its participation in UNPKO with WPS.

5.2.2 UN Peacekeeping and Mexico's National Action Plan

Former president Peña Nieto's government presented Mexico's candidature to the UNSC and lobbied for the bid. Instead of using its geographic representation or weight in the global economy, diplomats campaigned on Mexico's "displaying power" to win its seat at UNSC (Rossone de Paula, 2016). Displaying power means the capacity to use its position to support international security (ibid). Hence, diplomats set the ground for Mexico to return to the UNPKO in 2015 after not participating since 1993. This comeback is a vital component of the NAP, as most activities are gender mainstreaming in national institutions participating in UNPKO.

Debates about Mexico's return to UNPKO happened since former President Fox's administration in 2000. It did not prosper because non-intervention advocates were a significant political force. In 2012, when former President Peña Nieto took office, opposers lost seats in Congress, so it was easier for the Senate to authorise the exit of armed forces of the national territory. As political timing was favourable, in 2013, Peña Nieto instructed the creation of a Working Group for Peacekeeping Operations, whose objective was designing a roadmap to incorporate Mexican troops into UNPKO between 2015 and 2020. The initial return was moderate, not having a remarkable impact on the overall world troop and police contribution (Philipson and Velasco, 2021). Officials were deployed where Mexico had no influence, where the country partnered with powers, conflict-affected countries, and its regional peers. Again, the gains are symbolic, accounting for international audiences without fuelling critical national voices.

Diplomats increased Mexican troops until the military and police strengthened their infrastructure to comply with the standards required by the UN (SRE,2020). Mexican government received technical support from the UN Department of Peace Operations to set up Mexico's Joint Training Centre for Peacekeeping Operations (CECOPAM in Spanish). During the CECOPAM inauguration in 2020, high-level officials said that the country pledges to "deploy a greater number of women...Mexico opens its doors to train foreign personnel" (ibid). Their goal is for the CECOPAM to become UNPKO Joint Hub for excellence in LAC (SEDENA, 2021).

External pressure also influenced Mexico's rebound to UNPKO. France, as UNSC permanent member, through its former president Sarkozy said that Mexico was evading its international obligations by not being present in UNPKO (Zepeda, 2016). Likewise, LAC countries requested Mexican troops for the MINUSTAH, but SEDENA did not accept to participate. This damaged Mexico's image of solidary with its neighbours. WPS and UNPKO both serve to alleviate some diplomatic errors from the past.

WPS and UNPKO bring Mexico closer to other military organisations. To draft the NAP, diplomats exchanged "best practices" on gender mainstreaming in the military with the USA, the UK, China, and Ireland (SRE, 2022). Moreover, these two agendas helped to have an active presence in events with members of the Inter-American Defence Board. In this forum, Mexico usually had a small role because it is a regional space where the USA has military influence. Then it adds to Mexico maintaining good relations with military allies and building leadership as gender guardian.

The link between UNPKO and the WPS is present in most LAC NAPs. The region imitated the outward and military approach of Western liberal states (Drumond and Rebelo, 2020). Chile, Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay based their NAPs on their military and diplomatic involvement in UNPKO (Drumond et al., 2022). This trend responds to LAC's efforts to ensure its prestige as a conflict-free region. Diverging attention elsewhere helps avoid foreign questioning by camouflaging domestic divergence, gender inequality, and violence disparity. Another regional pattern is the liberal feminist style of the WPS participation pillar. Seven out of nine LAC NAPs prioritise increasing the women's presence in the armed forces participating in UNPKO and foreign policy (ibid). This pattern also accommodated national Mexico's context, where "structural changes in the international context, as well as to national situations that have led to a gradual opening (of women) in all military spheres" (Baranda, 2020). Mexico, the antepenultimate country to issue a NAP, mirrored its neighbours and adopted these two trends for convenience.

To wrap up, Mexico's foreign policy interest in accessing the UNSC through its comeback at UNPKO and building leadership in the thematic issue of WPS set the ground developing its first NAP.

5.3 Favourable institutional arrangements

This chapter argues that the NAP was drafted because of the favourable institutional arrangements that facilitated the military's participation in WPS. The progression of women's issues in the international arena influenced legal changes and new public policies to ensure gender equality and women's empowerment in all Mexican government bodies, including the military, since 1974. Prominently, 17 out of 21 NAP activities aim to address the current underrepresentation of Mexican women participating in UNPKO.

Mexican feminist and women's movements have advocated for a solid legal and institutional framework to ensure women's rights since long ago. The public started to notice them in 1974 when they achieved constitutional recognition of equal rights between men and women. Following standards from the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW, by 2006, Congress issued the General Law for Equality between Women and Men. The law created three instruments: the National System for Equality, the National Program for Equality, and the creation of the INMUJERES. With these changes, all Secretariats, including SEDENA and SEMAR, were mandated to develop gender mainstreaming mechanisms. However, the efforts focused on increasing numbers rather than fixing the institutional barriers restricting women military recruits (Newby and Sebag, 2020).

Although these reforms urged the military to address gender imbalance, they complied with them until later. Despite the political changes in various policy arenas in Mexico due to the political "alternation", the military sector had minimal changes (Zepeda, 2016). A civil-military pact initiated during the post-Revolution period, when the hegemonic party ruled, remained intact and allowed armed forces to keep autonomy from the cabinet until the late XX Century. When President Peña Nieto took office in 2012, civil-military relations strengthened, and the presidency was in a better place to integrate its gender equality and foreign policy strategy with the military.

In 2012, SEDENA finally developed a Programme on Gender Perspective Awareness and Training for the first time for their staff (SEDENA, 2022). Likewise, it established the Committee to Prevent and Address Sexual Harassment and the Observatory for Equality between Women and Men in the Mexican Army and Air Force (ibid). In the case of SEMAR, in 2008, it set up the Human Rights Promotion and Protection Unit. This area disseminates information on gender equality, human rights, and SGVB and attends to misconduct happening within their staff (SEMAR, 2022).

By 2021 when the NAP was published, the military got credentials for proclaiming a commitment to "women's participation and inclusion in national militaries and peacekeeping" (Newby and Sebag, 2020). The military joined national WPS efforts until a degree of institutional work was in place because gender balance was far from being achieved. Nevertheless, credibility was not easy locally. By 2020, SEDENA and SEMAR had accumulated accusations of human rights violations against women causing negative international opinion. Feminist NGOs warned of "two wars" with gendered impacts: sexism and misogyny affecting women's daily lives and the "War on Drugs", referring to the militarised strategies of retail drug cartels that elevated armed violence against women (Intersecta, 2021).

In 2009, Inés and Valentina's cases entered the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACtHR) jurisdiction. These indigenous women were sexually assaulted by soldiers who raided their houses (CEJIL, 2002). After reporting to authorities, they, their family, NGOs that supported them and advocates that helped them received death threats (ibid). The IACtHR ruled the criminal responsibility of Mexico. Rather than amending the abuses, the government protected the soldiers through military jurisdiction. Therefore, IACtHR urged the state to set up gender perspective training for the armed forces and resolve impunity under military jurisdiction.

Thereupon, NAP serves the military to message abroad that they comply with international frameworks to train "in the prevention of violence against women and girls, particularly sexual and gender-based violence, all from a gender and intercultural perspective" (SRE, 2021). In the following chapters, this paper explains why training and gender mainstreaming mechanisms do not account fully for obstacles to women's military careers or the military's abuses against women at home.

5.4 Change in the civil-military relations

Although there has been a breakthrough in the WPS practice, it tends to involve coordination among government bureaucracies and the military (Watson, 2022). The institutional scenario in a NAP's drafting is relevant. This paper argues that NAPs result from political processes of

"protest, contest, and negotiations by multiple actors" (Thomson and Whiting, 2022). Tensions in civil-military relations did not allow a NAP before 2021. Until significant power shifts happened after the so-called war against drugs, military and diplomats got closer to work on gender and security issues.

As mentioned, the hegemonic party rule established a civil-military pact around 1946. It consisted of rewarding the military with legal, judicial, and financial autonomy for helping Mexican Revolution generals to take power (Deare, 2021). In return, the army agreed to respect civilian authority and protect it from threats. This pact was possible because the president's figure controlled legislative and judicial powers (presidentialism) so that the military was never affected by civilian decisions.

SRE and armed forces worked together through shared beliefs until the late XX Century. The Mexican foreign policy principles mark off the scope of their cooperation. However, SEDENA disagreed with SRE when diplomats disregarded the non-intervention doctrine. It was in SEDENA's interest to avoid foreign interference, given its nationalist origin of protecting the country from invasions during the Mexican Revolution (Deare, 2021). The presidency mediated between these two as it has the constitutional authority to guide foreign policy, and the military maintains "strict obedience and subordination to the directives of the president" (ibid). The tensions are related to the presidential decision on which side he is (Zepeda, 2016).

The customary apprehension of the military about the outside world diminished as they received more foreign aid at the beginning of the XXI Century. Mexico and USA signed up for the Mérida Initiative in 2007, focusing on intelligence, law enforcement, and defence exchanges to win the so-called war against drugs (Deare, 2021). A heated discussion occurred when SRE became interested in Mexico's resuming participation in UNPKO. Diplomats convinced former president Peña Nieto to prompt the military to send officials to UNPKO. In 2015, SRE succeeded, and Mexico announced its return to UNPKO. The military agreed because Mexican foreign policy principles somewhat controlled the return.

SRE, SEDENA, and SEMAR increased their interactions to prepare deployments that appeared attractive to the UNSC. Before the "war against drugs", the military was deliberately unusable to ensure they did not organise a coup. However, with president Calderón and Peña Nieto, military expenditure and capability increased (CMDPDH, 2019). It became viable for the military's professionalisation for international action. CECOPAM was created for armed forces to "familiarise themselves with joint operations amongst groups from diverse systems, interact with other populations and expand their international perspective" (Pellicer, 2014). CECOPAM fuels the political economy of knowledge production on professionalisation because it helps legitimise Mexican military "expertise". Thus, NAP resulted from the alliance between SEDENA, SEMAR and SRE formalised in the Working Group of Peacekeeping Operations. In 2020, this group agreed to develop a NAP jointly. The aim was to issue it before Mexico participated in UNSC in 2021.

The NAP is also a consequence of the intensification of militarisation in Mexico. Power shifting happened in civil-military relations happened since the early XXI Century. Former president Calderón modified the civil-military pact so that "the military to remain accountable only to the presidency while intermittently police corps fell under the army and navy's formal or informal control" (Deare, 2021). Armed forces got intrusion in public affairs, like foreign policy

and gender. Similarly, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) is expanding the scope of the armed forces' activities, contributing to militarising the state, society, and politics. His government deploys the military for customs/border protection, deters undocumented migration, runs social programs, and builds and operates mega projects (HRW, 2022). WPS helps diplomats adapt to this new power configuration and remain close to the presidency and military.

NAP emerged during AMLO's government because it matched the campaign slogan of "Hugs, not Bullets" and its Plan for Peace and Security 2018-2024 (Deare, 2021). Before taking office, he said, "Mexico is a pacifist country that does not need an Army" (ibid). Similarly, his rhetoric stated that his government is the most feminist in Mexican history. Nevertheless, he has reduced the budget for gender equality programmes and stigmatised International Women's Day demonstrations. These seemingly contradictory realities have generated significant international and national concerns, and the NAP helps alleviate them. WPS fit into AMLO's discourse of peacebuilding and feminist government.

To sum up, Mexican foreign policy tends to stay mostly the same across administrations, but with AMLO, the timing allowed steps in one direction. The particularities of his government about advancing militarism and "feminist" rulemaking fit with diplomats' long ambition to develop a NAP for Mexico to become a gender champion and an international security reference. NAP results superimposition of the liberal world order into which aspects of peacebuilding and gender must be locally translated from international frameworks like the WPS (Young, 2003). Diplomatic and military elites resisted "internalising" WPS due to concerns about involvement from more powerful countries (Basu, 2016). Mexico's NAP is outward focused via UNPKO to divert the attention of government omission on not reducing violence nationally.

Chapter 6: How “localised” is Mexico’s National Action Plan?

This section analyses how Mexico's NAP translates the WPS architecture into the national context. By assessing the objectives, lines of action, performance measurements and other relevant elements (please refer to Annex IV to further revision of the NAP), this research summarises how the plan responds to local realities and concerns in Mexico. Moreover, this investigation describes how NAP drafters conceptualised peace, security, and gender, which are crucial to evaluating NAP alignment with the feminist ambitions of activists that lobbied for UNSCR 1325. This section's contribution is the NAP areas of opportunities to provide insights into the workings of the WPS in Mexico.

6.1 Unravelling the translation of Women, Peace, and Security pillars in Mexico’s National Action Plan

NAP priorities and objectives point out the specific gender, peace and security change authorities want to take forward. Ideally, priority definition results from solid evidence of gendered impacts affecting women and revising insecurity problems at the national and sub-national levels. Studies about NAP assessment (Shepherd et al., 2020; Miller, 2014; Fritz et al., 2010) note a global trend of countries selecting NAP priorities based on the four pillars recommended by the UN Secretary-General in 2002: 1)Prevention of violence and conflict, 2)Participation of women in peace and security governance, 3)Protection of women in conflict and post-conflict setting, 4)Relief and Recovery that foster gender mainstreaming in humanitarian action and inclusion of women in post-conflict reconstruction (Shepherd, 2020).

Mexico's NAP followed this fashion. Most of the objectives and lines of action, which are the concrete goals and activities to achieve Prevention, Participation, Protection, and Relief and Recovery, rest under the first two. This section demonstrates that the four pillars in Mexico's plan mirror the current government's interests in anchoring women's issues as a foreign policy interest and a militarised understanding of security.

6.1.1 Prevention

This investigation argues that NAP's prevention pillar reflects a liberal feminist understanding of emancipation. It builds on women's inclusion as a satisfactory solution to fix asymmetric power relations in security institutions, which narrows the scope for radical change within this sector (Hudson, 2012). It equals gender as women and does not address the root causes of violence in Mexico.

The description of the prevention pillar is "mainstreaming gender in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding; creating effective mechanisms and institutions for early warning; and strengthening measures to prevent gender-based violence against women and girls" (SRE, 2021). Prevention has three objectives: one objective focuses on Mexico's participation in UNPKO, and two goals focus on the federal level and the local level. Lines of actions emphasise "promoting gender mainstreaming" and "raising awareness about the role of women in conflict

prevention and peace processes" (ibid). The pillar needs to explain how all this will reduce ongoing insecurity.

The gender drivers of insecurity are under-theorised in Mexico (Basu and Shepherd, 2018). Civil society warns that "homicide and femicide records cannot be contrasted with data on other crimes or sociodemographics information, which impedes an analysis of the interconnectedness... and authorities fail to properly register essential information" (Data Cívica and Intersecta, 2021). At the minimum, the NAP should have aimed to strengthen the information systems to identify how violence affects women, men, and non-conforming populations differently and disproportionately. Prevention should rest on intersectional evidence-based policies that attend to drivers of violence. NAP implementers should examine the socio-political arrangements that produce threats, injustices, and everyday insecurity (Shepherd, 2020).

The pillar's lines of action and objectives are targeted at "institutions responsible for peacekeeping and security" that the NAP defines as "military and police" (SRE, 2021). WPS academics argue that Prevention should be attached to institutions that seek to cease violence through force or punishment (Shepherd, 2020). Preventive actions should opt for a logic "undoing security – as the manifestation of prevention in practice – in queer, feminist, decolonial, and posthuman ways of knowing and encountering the world" (ibid). Peacebuilding is happening in the margins of state institutions.

This pillar relies entirely upon trainings. However, what constitutes training is unclear, the curricula vary, and the quality of the training is unknown. The first NAP implementation report enlists online seminars and academic conferences as training. Curricula include various topics, like "Language beyond gender" or "New Masculinities". SSPC categorises "Initial training for police officers" as preventive actions (SRE, 2021). Similarly, the educational methodologies and trainers' qualifications are unavailable to the public. The SSPC interviewee said, "there is a lack of gender trainers with police experience".

Training as the primary preventive measure must be reconsidered, mainly since no MEAL mechanism guarantees its desired impact. Worst, NGO research affirms that training does not have a positive effect (Intersecta and Data Cívica, 2020). Gender training increased in SEMAR in 2020; approximately 68 thousand women reported mental, physical, or sexual perpetrated by the military or marines, according to official data (ENDIREH, 2021).

The pillar depends heavily upon gender mainstreaming in the security sector, though it does not describe what it is. Prevention indicators and goals indicate that gender mainstreaming means "the number of women" or "the number of trainings" (SRE, 2021). It reveals a liberal feminist vision of emancipation based on *parity of participation* (Fraser, 2007). Critical feminisms challenge this approach because it does not account for a variety of feminist concerns, such as class, "race", and sexuality differentials, to name a few (ibid). Additionally, it does not fix "subordination relayed through institutionalised patterns of cultural value" meaning harmful power asymmetries in labour relations to reduce subordination (ibid).

Institutional transformation is needed so that "gender is no longer a structure of inequality constitutive of the organisation" (EIGE, 2016). Although SEDENA, SEMAR and SSPC have gender mainstreaming mechanisms, Prevention does not address them. At a minimum, the NAP should have pledged to improve these mechanisms to ensure a workplace

that fosters non-discrimination and violence. Women's inclusion in the Navy and Mexico's deployments to the UNPKO increased from 2018 onwards (López et al., 2020). Even so, "their participation still in a professional environment that does not guarantee a respectful and empowering atmosphere in the workplace, free from any form of harassment, promoting work-life balance, better reconciliation of work and family" (ibid). Official data registered that 39.6% of policewomen reported acts of discrimination, theft, threats, injuries, extortion, and even sexual assault against them from colleagues and detained men (ENCAP, 2017).

Policewomen face barriers to growing professionally. According to official data, only 1.9% occupy high ranks (ibid). In a study, policewomen said that "they face gender bias in task assignments, rather than capacity, which isolated them from the actual "job description" and the possibility of having a promotion; they face discriminatory promotion practices" (Chudnovsky and Millán, 2021). If NAP seeks women's recognition in the security sector, it should aim to ensure equal opportunities for them. The NAP Inter-Secretariat Group must look at "equal pay for equal or comparable work done by women and men, gender-sensitive staff recruitment and performance appraisals, gender balance in staffing patterns and a fair representation of women in managerial positions" (EIGE, 2016).

The pillar description highlights "creating effective mechanisms and institutions for the early warning"; nonetheless, there is no subsequent reference to it (SRE, 2021). Mexico set up the first early warning system in LAC called Alert Mechanism for Gender Violence Against Women (AVGM), which coordinates "emergency actions to confront gender violence in a specific territory, whether exercised by the state, individuals or the community" (EUROsociAL+, 2019). Although it has significant shortcomings, such as insufficient funding and human resources, delays in activation, weak enforceability, etc., the AVGM is a valuable mechanism to prompt cooperation between federal institutions, local authorities, civil society, and victims (ibid). If policymakers want to emulate early warning in WPS, they should consider a comprehensive reform of the AVGM and synergy with the NAP.

The pillar leaves two other lines of action hanging. It aims to "improve public spaces based on an approach of safe cities for women", but activities are "to be defined" (SRE, 2021). Mexico is part of the UN Women's Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces Global Flagship Programme Initiative, which addresses SGVB in urban public spaces, so most likely, NAP took an alignment with it (UN Women, 2016). Sexual harassment in public transportation is an everyday reality for Mexican women. In 2021, 74% of women reported feeling insecure in public transport, according to official data (ENVIPE, 2021). If further developed, it has the potential to conceptualise security and peace as a *violence continuum*. Similarly, the pillar mentions the set-up of "a specialised in the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of crimes of violence against women as part of the deployment of Gender Missions WPS" (SRE, 2021). Yet there is no follow-up mention of it.

The prevention pillar should rely on more than just training. It should address "the whole process from pre- through to post-conflict, including early warning systems, monitoring of instability, ceasefires and disarmament programmes, peace talks and agreements, and building positive peace and sustainable development" (Speake, 2013). The pillar must incorporate a peace approach, which contemplates a broader understanding of insecurity that "identifies and addresses cross-cutting challenges to people's livelihood" (ibid). Feminist peace is better suited for Mexico's reality since its scope of application is suitable for "both in-conflict and non-conflict

countries, considering that insecurities are not only related to the violent conflict" (ibid). Likewise, the pillar needs a revision of its approach to emancipation. NAP obscures the urgency of reducing institutional and structural barriers to equality faced by historically marginalised groups in the security sector.

6.1.2 Participation

This research argues that this pillar language recognises women's right to participate in local security and UNPKO (Tuncel, 2021). However, women's participation is embedded in liberal feminism and peace. The pillar assumes that women's appearance in security decision-making will be defined by a status of subordination, giving excessive focus to women that enhance sexual difference (Frayser, 2007). Likewise, it acknowledges local women collective agencies as security contributors in essentialised terms (Hudson, 2012).

The description is the "meaningful participation of women...and their representation on all levels of decision-making related to the conflict" (SRE, 2021). Four objectives constitute this pillar: three focusing on women's participation in UNPKO and one focusing on supporting local women peacemakers' networks. Lines of action and activities underline a path to "promote women's participation", "exchange good practices on women's participation", and "global proposals on gender equality" (SRE, 2021). The pillar is densely militarised, policed, and outward-oriented. 10 out of 11 activities are foreign policy actions to be implemented by armed forces (SRE, 2021). Nevertheless, objective six have as NAP agents in municipalities and women's grassroots networks.

Pillar language reveals that women's participation is an instrument for Mexico to accelerate its international gender commitments. This rationale reveals the liberal peace and feminist thesis. In liberal peacebuilding, interventions are designed from the top down. International organisations like UNPKO and the West ask supporters to contribute to international stability by demonstrating commitment by adopting their peace wisdom (Hudson, 2017). Similarly, the pillar's narrative suggests that women's presence is seen as an end, "not as a product of, and productive of, security practices", equaling politics of gender and politics of security (ibid). It demonstrates less attachment to a feminist peace project and less pledge to improving gender labour relations in the security sector. All pillar indicators assess processes, not outcomes. The performance measurement is based on the number of women trained or deployed in UNPKO. Indicators that evaluate if women's status and opportunities improved after NAP adoption should be added, such as professional growth, recruitment criteria, appraisals, retention, and promotion of the officials participating in UNPKO or training abroad.

Mexico has the third highest record of women's participation as Military Observers and Staff Officers worldwide in UNPKO contributions, with 40% as of September 2022 (UNPKO, 2022). Notably, Mexico's contribution to UNPKO is limited. The percentage of women is discretionary because the overall proportion is modest (Philipson and Velasco, 2021). Moreover, Mexico paused its participation in UNPKO for more than 20 years. Hence, its comeback was defined by the advantageous institutional configurations mentioned in previous chapters. The focus should be on more than just women. Participation in UNPKO was new for men as well. Fraser (2007) warns about "sexually irresponsible scroungers", meaning assuming gender subordination when there is no evidence. Recognition actions such as "increasing women's

nominations" affect their organisational status and identity, often fuelling sexual differences (SRE, 2021). It could have a sexist effect if the justification is based on cultural stereotypes like "women needing special attention". These efforts should be accompanied by cultural organisation change for revaluing negative feminine associations (Fraser, 2007).

Newby and Sebag (2021) argue that national forces and the countries' deployments to UNPKO should be analysed jointly. They warn about "side streaming" phenomenon, which refers to relegating women, either deliberately or unintentionally, to specialised areas linked with gender stereotypes, like non-combat activities, civilian-like tasks, non-dangerous missions, and highest ranks of the operation, among others (ibid). Therefore, it is disappointing that the pillar does not promise to upgrade women's presence in the security sector at the bare minimum. As of March 2021, women account for only 11% (25,257) out of the total members of the ranks of the Mexican army and air force (SEDENA, 2022). Worse, from 2019 to early 2022, only 3.5% (56) of women in the army and air Force were promoted to the ranks of General or Colonel (ibid). Thus, NAP drafters should have considered gender-equitable military and police structure actions to avert side streaming.

The NAP dedicates one activity to identifying obstacles preventing women from participating in UNPKO. Eight interviewees refer to the most relevant standout of the NAP. On February 2021, the Elsie Initiative Fund awarded Mexico a project to diagnose impediments "that prevent more women from participating in UNPKO and security tasks" (SRE, 2021). Inter-Secretariat Group should publish the findings and adopt its recommendations. Future research should also look at comprehending gender, "race", class, masculinities, and other hierarchies in the military. Studies relevant to unpack how women employ violence and force as security agents would also be helpful (Newby and Sebag, 2021).

The pillar intends to "localise" the WPS global norms at the subnational level. Objective six refers to a programme called MUCPAZ, launched in 2019, that strengthens financially and technically women peacemakers' networks by supporting the exchange of international and national best practices in "local peacebuilding strategies" (SRE, 2021). This programme indicates that WPS narratives are part of the federal cabinet's vocabulary because it is anchored as an outcome of the National Programme for Equality between Women and Men 2020-2024 and the Mexican Feminist Foreign Policy). Although the WPS is somewhat present in MUCPAZ and governments' strategies, its value is not. SSPC interviewee said, "Secretary Rosa Icela acknowledges the value of the WPS, but many high-rank authorities do not". While MUCPAZ tries to enhance ownership, grassroots are unaware of WPS or NAP. Global Thought MX interviewee said, "civil society and women peacebuilders know little about the UNSCR 1325. International frameworks are useful for them if they bring tangible impacts".

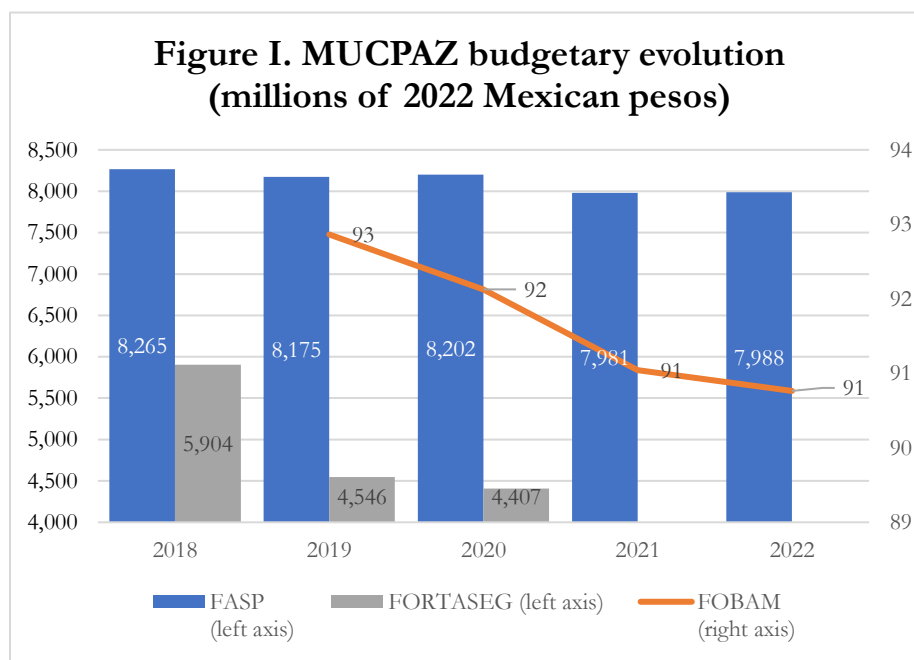
NAP language on MUCPAZ exposes postcolonial forms of governance that mould current liberal peacebuilding. "Subaltern women", meaning local peacemakers, are portrayed as needing skills from "international experts". The state and global players delimit women's agency in security (Hudson, 2017). Women political role is separated from national and international machinery and kept in the community (ibid). It is assumed that women peacemaker's inclusion inherently translates into "local ownership" rather than analysing the structural obstacles of "state-building as a policy regime" (ibid). Local networks' peacebuilding contribution is justified because women have "the greatest burden of social decomposition that generates violence" for their role as sisters, mothers, and partners (MUCPAZ, 2022). The frame of their participation is

framed in gendered essentialised justifications, feeding the "normalisation of gender subjectivities that assign particular security roles to women and men" (Newby and Sebag, 2021).

Anyhow, MUCPAZ defines security in not militarised terms. This programme has a community security approach. It aims to "rebuild the social fabric from the local level and promote peaceful conflict resolution with the active participation of women" (Gasman, 2021). INMUJERES, in collaboration with the civil security bodies (SESNSP and SSCP) and municipalities, implements it in 27 out of 32 states of Mexico. The interviewee coordinating MUCPAZ execution said:

"MUCPAZ is different because of its view of violence prevention. MUCPAZ supports with training, accompaniment and resources women networks that work on various security issues such as neighbourhood patrol, social integration of former people deprived of liberty, and improvement and occupation of public spaces, among others".

MUCPAZ describes women in plural terms. It acknowledges the diversity of women participating in security issues such as urban, afro-descendant, indigenous and rural (MUCPAZ, 2022). Unfortunately, MUCPAZ's financing is uncertain. Its funding faces shortages. It comes from the federal budget lines Program for the Strengthening of Security (FORTASEG), Public Security Contribution Fund (FASP in Spanish) and Women's Welfare and Advancement Fund (FOBAM in Spanish). Figure I. shows the changes in the budgets of FORTASEG (eliminated in 2022), FASP and FOBAM from 2018 to 2022. The budget proposal, already submitted to Congress for approval, follows the marginal increase trend for next year. The budget should be sustainable to assess its impact at least.



Source: Own elaboration with information from the Mexico's Federal Budget Approved Budgets

To summarise, the participation pillar needs straightening. MUCPAZ allows NAP policymakers to click as checked the localisation and ownership boxes. Nevertheless, on the

ground, WPS experience via MUCPAZ adds to critiques of liberal peace and liberal feminism, where women's peacebuilding inclusion is framed into global norms to gain legitimacy (Basini and Ryan, 2016). The pillar emphasises increasing women's presence in UNPKO. However, it does not seek to improve equity among military structures. Pillar does intend to "understand and then unlearn the system that discriminates against different social groups in the first place" (Tuncel, 2021).

6.1.3 Protection

This paper argues that the protection pillar assumes that trained staff make armed forces more professional, accountable, and respectful of women's rights, contributing to a reduction of SGVB (Hudson, 2012). It would remedy the issue if not accompanied by institutionalised sexist patterns within the military (Fraser, 2007).

Pillar's definition is "guarantee the security, physical and mental integrity, health — including sexual and reproductive health and rights— wellbeing, economic security, and dignity of women and girls" (SRE, 2021). It has two objectives: ensuring Mexican troops participating in UNPKO rest women's rights and promoting SGVB zero-tolerance among the national military (*ibid*). The pillar's actions reside again in training that, unlike other pillars, has an academic component.

The pillar places training as a standalone intervention to address SGVB during UNPKO missions. The first implementation report highlights 69,375 soldiers trained on national law on violence against women and the WPS framework (SRE, 2021). Again, the quality of the training needs scrutiny. Some training titles are "I know gender 1,2 and 3: basic concepts of gender" and do not indicate robust curricula of comprehensive assistance to victims and survivors (*ibid*). At the minimum, these "academic" programmes should equip Mexican blue helmets to interact non-harmfully with citizens and refer survivors to specialised attention if needed (Donges and Kulenberg, 2018). For work abroad, there would need to be more helpful than legislation but skills building.

Training fits well under time and money constraints but evidences a lack of commitment (Datta, 2004). Reducing SGVB in the military requires cultural change from its members, their social relations and the structural hierarchies prevailing in the institution. It implies "questioning power, control of resources, and conflict which are potentially challenging and undoubtedly difficult to deal with" (*ibid*). A liberal world order remains intact if there is trust in "business as usual" without challenging how business is done (Hudson, 2012). It requires revising the institutional mechanisms to attend to violence and discrimination. However, there are small references to SEDENA, SEMAR and SSPC gender offices.

NAP's first implementation report announces an update in SEDENA's Attention, Prevention and Sanction of Sexual Harassment Protocol. Notwithstanding, there is no public version, even of the previous version, so it is unclear if the modifications correct or worsen its content. A recent data leak revealed that in 2021, 308 soldiers were accused, prosecuted, or sentenced for violating human rights (Zerega and Reina, 2022). Of these, 23 of these cases were rape or sexual abuse related. Five were sentenced, ten were prosecuted, and the rest of the case was archived. It is highly concerning, mainly because the legal framework provides the military

with a worrying degree of autonomy and a lack of transparency and accountability (WOLA, 2022).

WPS academics recommend capturing protection to address all forms of violence and impediments for women's rights faced every day. As a state-building project, NAP must attend to the violence faced within Mexican borders and provide quality services, strengthening access to healthcare, psychosocial support, legal assistance, and socioeconomic emancipation for victims of human rights violations (ibid). Mexico set up Justice Centres for Women, which offer temporary accommodation, psychiatric, legal, and medical care, a playroom staffed with child development professionals, and social and economic independence, all under one roof (Mir and Veraza, 2018). Given the many flaws documented by civil society in this system, NAP can aspire to strengthen and improve it.

In other NAPs, civil society finds uses of WPS to draw commitment to local needs for protection (Basu, 2016). Mexican NGOs run more than 75 shelters, 35 centres of external attention and 35 "houses of the afro-descendant and indigenous women" to provide spaces of protection where women whose lives are in danger live for at least three months (RNR, 2022). These offer various services, from psychological and physical health to legal counselling and housing. The shelters account for 80% of the protection spaces for women in all the regions of Mexico (ibid). In 2021, the financial support for these shelters was \$415.9 million pesos (Intersecta, 2022). That year, the Armed Forces spent \$459.9 million on trips abroad (ibid). NAP implementers can flag resources and support its valuable contribution to the WPS protection pillar, particularly given the fact military non-essential work abroad has been prioritised over victim's support.

WPS framework call for improving the justice delivery systems for those who have experienced and survived violence. Feminist organisations documented discriminatory practices in court decisions and judgments and a lack of diligence in granting effective restraining orders for women in danger (EQUIS, 2022). WPS can spike interesting conversations around correcting shortcomings of the criminal justice system and rethink access to justice with a transformative perspective. Feminist scholars theorise the WPS with justice in terms of "experiences of violence are directly related to their unequal status. Justice is as much about dealing with the past as it is about securing a better future that includes guarantees of non-recurrence" (Boesten and Wilding, 2015). There are practical and procedural problems around evidence and testimony, institutional bias, and hierarchies of harm to women's access to justice.

Hence, the protection pillar needs rearrangement. It diverts attention to SGVB abroad from local insecurity. This paper advises consolidating a protection approach that strengthens and improves the national institutions and mechanisms to assist SGVB victims. This investigation recommends collaboration with civil society. They have valuable expertise in accompanying victims with community-based, intersectional, and comprehensive approaches.

6.1.4 Relief and Recovery

This paper argues that the Relief and Recovery (RR) pillar rests in "Westphalia's power politics" because it depends on the UNSC (Parashar, 2016). It leaves unruffled the hierarchical structure

of the global system, inhibiting the adoption of gender as a power dynamic and non-mainstream conceptions of peace (MartindeAlmagro, 2018).

RR's description is "promoting women's equal access and participation in both aid distribution and humanitarian assistance" (SRE, 2021). This pillar is the most foreign policy-focused because all activities are multilateral initiatives. RR is the termination of the NAP's missed chance to advance feminist peace at home (Philipson and Velasco, 2021).

A primary pillar outcome is Mexico's role as a Catalytic Member of the Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action Compact (WPS-HA) launched in 2021 (SRE, 2021). The WPS-HA emerged as a side process of the Generation Equality Forum, in which Mexico was a co-host. This forum was a 2021 international conference commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform and establishing a five-year action plan to achieve gender progress (UN Women, 2021). As a co-organiser, it was an obligation of Mexican diplomats to facilitate discussions around thematic areas of the declaration, of which "Women and armed conflict" was one of them. Diplomats merited by facilitating the WPS-HA's creation; however, anchoring it as an after-NAP action is fallacious.

Other pillar performance results are 15 Mexico-led UNSC initiatives (SRE, 2021). For critical IR feminists, RR through WPS should entail taking steps outside the traditional international security and establishing connections with decision-making on equality and rights. UNSC action maintains the "hierarchy of legitimacy that directs political authority upward" to this international organisation (Shepherd, 2017). The nation-state keeps subordinated to UNSC's rational masculinised power unless there is action to change it radically. Some of Mexico's initiatives are "UNSC products integrate strong WPS language", which are conformist to the "business as usual" of the UNSC and WPS (Norway, 2022).

The focus on UNSC reveals Mexico's aspiration to have masculinised credibility and authority in the international (Shepherd, 2017). Contradictorily, that undermines the NAP objective of "people is a priority element of its domestic and international" (SRE, 2021). It overlooks bottom-up peacebuilding projects, preferring top-down UNSC. At the bare minimum, NAP as an outward project should consider "the needs and wants of others", as Feminist IR scholars defend (Robinson, 2019). According to Robinson (2021), countries that adopt a Feminist Foreign Policy, such as Mexico, should promote a critical feminist ethic of care in global governance. It seeks to build empathy and repair relationships to transform global politics that currently are a "male and masculinist domain of hard (state) power" (Shepherd, 2017).

The plan does not intend to "localise" RR, forgetting the point of having a NAP. WPS architecture links RR in "peacetime" contexts like Mexico with efforts such as "transitional justice mechanisms, reparations, and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programs" (True, 2020). Mexico faces weak social fabric due to the legacies of massive and severe human rights violations. More than 100 thousand people are missing, at least 4 thousand mass graves and 81% impunity (Correa, 2019). WPS can spike policy discussions about how to assist victims in realising their rights to justice, truth, and reparation and recognise their dignity (ibid).

Some national institutions assist victims in their quest for recognition and redress for sex- and gender-based offences perpetrated during systemic abuse: the Executive Commission of Attention to Victims, Truth Commissions and National Search Commission. Different victim

movements have pushed for more substantial changes, resulting in legal changes, creating these bodies, and strengthening jurisprudence. Nevertheless, these endure limitations in capacity and resources, which WPS policymakers can support.

National policies and institutions often fail to account for "economic recovery, employment, and livelihood services for women and girls" (True, 2019). Extreme violence in Mexico limits economic and social recovery (ibid). Systematic human rights abuse exacerbates gender discrimination in employment, displacement and resettlement in marginalised locations, and lack of decent work, adding to gendered marginalisation (ibid). Due to the flaws in the prosecuting system, seeking justice requires victims to invest their time, which is costly financially and emotionally (AI, 2021). Neoliberal processes such as commodification and privatisation devalue reproductive activities in which women participate the most (ibid). So, the WPS socio-economic perspective of RR can elevate Mexico's policy debates around fairer resource distribution for women victims of human rights.

To sum up, the NAP must account for RR policy at the national level. NAP implementers must try to reform the sexist international system if still taken within IR. Adding a feminist ethic of care to the WPS multilateral work would be more appropriate to honour UNSCR 1325 activists. NAPs policymakers must work with other local bodies to assist victims comprehensively.

6.2 Mexico's National Action Plan as a gendered state-building project

Previous chapters argued that NAP is a state-building project rising from liberal peace and liberal feminism ideals. If scrutinised through liberal policy lenses of effectiveness and, more specifically, from the assessment of *the NAP High-Impact review*, NAP has areas of opportunities (Miki, 2018). This research argues that NAP fails at its policy purpose of "internalising" UNSCR 1325.

NAP emerged from an exclusionary process and without a public policy cycle. Moreover, it lacks enforceability and ownership across the cabinet, resulting in a poor sustained political will (ibid). Similarly, NAP MEAL mechanisms are deficient, and resource allocation is ambiguous. All these shortcomings make it difficult for NAP to achieve its goal of "substantive participation of women as real and effective actors in conflict prevention at all levels" (SRE, 2021), as well as to address critical feminist debates on the localisation of NAP.

"Strong and sustained political will" (Miki, 2018)

The interviews clearly showed that the Inter-Agency Group drafted the NAP in less than a year. The Working Group of Peacekeeping Operations started the drafting on March 2020 and culminated with its publication on January 11, 2021. Nonetheless, a public report from SSPC said the plan was finalised by October 2020 to coincide with the UNSCR 1325 anniversary. This research unknown why the delay in the publication. NAP, allegedly drafted in five months, reveals a fast design. A rapid NAP elaboration demonstrates that "international commitments are being met in a way that satisfies the need for state profile in the international arena with little

real thought being invested into their impact” (Swaine, 2009). Seven interviewees said the NAP launch intended to coincide with Mexico’s UNSC membership in November 2021 and the WPS-HA launch in the same year.

NAP’s fast development also resulted in a lack of policy cycle sequence. NAP was adopted because it is non-binding, and no component compels government bodies to enforce it. Interviewees were asked if the NAP followed the Mexican policy formats that have enforceability, such as Executive Orders, agreements, decrees, charters, etc. All confirm that it is an informal interministerial document. NAP has discursive power abroad, but compliance is up to the Inter-Agency Group goodwill.

The NAP creation was distant from the larger and more powerful national policy actors. NAP was drafted by the Working Group of Peacekeeping Operations (Conformed by SRE, SEDENA, SEMAR, SSPC, SHCP and the Presidency) and its non-regular members INMUJERES and UN Women. All these later established the NAP’s Inter-Agency Group. Other relevant security and gender bodies were left behind. National Council to Prevent Discrimination, which works on intersectionality, or the SESNSP, which coordinates citizen security actions with municipalities, should have participated. The WPS was narrowed to foreign security bodies with occasional participation of gender institutions. NAPs lack national ownership because it does not promote dialogues and processes across ministries.

Seven interviewees said NAP drafters were a small group of committed WPS actors from selected federal Ministries (Thomson and Whiting, 2022). Specific individuals, who happen to be institutional feminist advocates and working in security and gender in different Ministries and administrations, provided direction, mobilisation, and continuity to build the NAP. They boost allyship among SEDENA, and SEMAR to make it happen. They are interested in its progress because they have seen its impact. SEDENA interviewee said, “WPS helped soldiers to reflect on gender equality. WPS resonates with military women whose work is undervalued”.

“Inclusive design process” (Miki, 2018)

All interviewees said NAP drafting was conducted without involvement from non-government actors or local stakeholders. NAP states, "ensure dialogue with other relevant institutions and establish mechanisms with international organisations, academia, civil society and other actors for the implementation of the lines of action" (SRE, 2021). Anyhow, the nature of this is not mentioned. WPS's central tenet is civil society participation because it provides an overview of situations embodied locally, providing valuable information for WPS contextualisation to specific socio-political environments (Shepherd et al., 2020). Basu (2016) argues that Global South experiences should be the focus of WPS as a political project. Appreciating this peacebuilding knowledge could reframe how gender and security are governed globally (ibid).

"Key emerging trends" (Miki, 2018)

The NAP exclusionary creation culminated in a priority selection that distances from the everyday gendered insecurity in Mexico. NAP does not thoroughly account for emerging security issues beyond the standard. It does not reflect the diverse experiences of urban, rural, etc., settings. While NAP remarks on "preventing and combating violent extremism that can lead to terrorism, disarmament, non-proliferation, and arms control", there is no further reference to it.

For the WPS to be pertinent for Mexico, policymakers must address the disproportionate and complex ways women's diverse security needs intersect with various other issues. UN Women, as one dominant WPS authority internationally, suggested that the following matters: growing militarisation, increased availability of small arms and light weapons, poor institutionality and territorial control of organised crime, impunity and corruption, lack of trust in government, transitional justice, flaws in criminal justice, restrictive immigration policies, extractivism, attacks and criminalisation of human rights defenders and journalists, lack of care policies, among others (2020).

"Established coordination system for implementation" (Miki, 2018)

NAP content is an inventory of activities rather than a concrete step to accomplish UNSCR 1325. The NAP critical path for the implementation enlists "strategic goals, lines of action, activities, indicators, goal and institutions in charge" per the WPS pillar (SRE, 2021). However, it does not provide specifications on how indicators are directly related to the strategic goals, lines of action activities and institutions in charge. Variables are not interconnected. It is not specified which institution is responsible for implementing each one of the activities. The table only provides a list of all the institutions in charge per strategic goal, not defining per activity. Worse, the table does not contain a timeframe. Therefore, the critical path of implementation is a summary of variables lacking a logical sequence map that assigns responsibilities, activities and timebound of each WPS pillar.

The absence of a timeframe on the NAP's critical implementation path is strategic. Policymakers reviewed and gathered information on what the government was doing on WPS before the NAP drafting. As shown in Appendice III, prior administrations created and implemented some of the NAP's actions. MUCPAZ and the safe cities initiative are the only WPS innovations of the plan. Regrettably, these were executed before NAP publication. Ergo, NAP is not forward-looking. NAP activities adapt to the government's "business as usual" instead of looking at gaps blocking WPS progression in Mexico. The risk of accommodating the NAP to the current rulemaking is that it misses the feminist peace ambitions of bringing transformations (ibid).

Interviewees emphasised that NAP is a touchstone in interinstitutional collaboration. As detailed earlier, there was tension between the diplomatic and military elites, and NAP brought them closer. Collaboration also increased with gender bureaucrats. Three interviewees said NAP elevated awareness about WPS value among mid-level civil servants. They highlighted, at least among the Inter-Agency Group, there is a recognition of WPS utility.

Identified and allocated implementation resources (Miki, 2018)

Miki (2018) claims that for NAP's activities to be efficiently operationalised, it needs sufficient and specific budget allocation. For a NAP to be *High-Impact*, financing must have "proper management and tracking of funds" (Shepherd et al., 2020). The NAP critical path of implementation does not determine resources for each one of the activities in a time framework. It says that "each coordinating institution must carry out the activities contemplated in the NAP-1325 with its own human and financial resources" (SRE, 2021). NAP mandates institutions to execute activities without analysing what resources each agency will need and then granting them.

The NAP budget is subject to the discretion of implementing bodies. Institutions that do not possess sufficient resources may withdraw from commitments without repercussion.

Notwithstanding, Mexico's NAP does not even have explicit funds because it is a compendium of already implemented activities with funding from each member of the Inter-Agency Group. Even so, SRE, SSCP, and INMUJERES interviewees recognised that they lacked the financial resources to execute NAP. Mexico's federal public budget contains a specific allocation for gender equality labelled under *Annex 13, Expenditures for Equality between Men and Women*. With AMLO's government, Annex 13 mainly allocates resources for federal social programs, which do not include gender programming (CIEP, 2022). Paradoxically, programs to prevent and address SGVB, maternal health and INMUJERES programmes represent less than 10% of the total Annex 13 budget (ibid). NAP is another proof of the more significant financial reduction of non-discrimination and women's rights programmes in Mexico, which are desperately needed. Worse, SSCP interviewee said that gender training for police and National Guard rested on devoted feminist trainers that conduct them voluntarily. NAP is somewhat sustained by unpaid labour.

Contrastingly, SEMAR and SEDENA interviewees reported sufficient funding for NAP activities. Military budget increases as militarisation advances. According to an NGO analysis, SEDENA and SEMAR's resource allocation grew by 163% and 393%, respectively, from 2020 to 2022 (MUCD, 2022). Likewise, the SSPC's budget has increased minimally and only to expand staff from the National Guard, a civilian control body conformed by the military in its majority (ibid). In 2022, INMUJERES received a budget to sustain 251 personnel (Intersecta, 2022). In contrast, SEDENA got 259,689. With SEDENA's staff, there could be 1000 INMUJERES staff (ibid). While Mexico stated at UNSC WPS debate in 2022 that "increasing expenditure of military spending is a step backwards for the rights of women and girls", AMLO's government is doing the opposite (GNWP, 2022).

Results-based monitoring and evaluation plan (Miki, 2018)

MEAL is crucial for a NAP to verify if "intended change has been achieved or how much progress has been made toward reaching the goal" (Miki, 2018). In the case of Mexico, NAP assigns monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to the Inter-Agency Group. It grants responsibility to it to make inquiries on progress, audit and update content and report on results. However, seven interviewees said SRE drafted most of NAP's first implementation report.

NAP's performance indicators are quantitative. NAP MEAL is based on reporting activities institutions wish to show off rather than the outcomes and results they achieve. Successful indicators would evidence impacts and outcomes with a qualitative result orientation. Inter-Agency Group should consider making measurable, achievable, relevant, and timebound indicators. Other indicators that are comprehensive and contextualised to Mexico need to be included. For instance, NAP should aim to link their activities to social benefits like reducing gendered insecurity, such as extreme gender-based violence.

To wrap up, NAP lacks a component that compels implementers to act. The commitment to implement UNSCR 1325 is high, at least among mid-level officials that drafted the NAP, and this research acknowledges it to be of great value. Nevertheless, NAP's poor positioning among the larger cabinet and other actors, insufficient funding, and robust

accountability mechanisms terminates in NAP being a discursive tool with little ambition for impact or substance on feminist peace or security nationally (Swaine, 2009). NAPs were envisioned to redo the state working for feminist peace. In the case of Mexico, it was the opposite. (Thomson and Whiting, 2022). Postcolonial feminists' evidence when gender and peace are co-opted and adapted within hegemonic frameworks is still delimited by male and hard (state) power (Hudson, 2012).

Chapter 7: Alternatives to liberal feminist and liberal peace complicity

This section summarises alternatives to liberal-feminist and liberal-peace complicity against NAP's multiple policy and conceptual shortcomings. It utilises critical feminist IR perspectives to envision non-mainstream conceptions of gender, peace, and security.

Previous chapters demonstrated that NAP is a foreign policy tool impacting insecurity outside Mexican borders. NAP implementers need to remediate the absence of not addressing insecurity within Mexico's border. A quick solution and simplified option would be to "add" emerging local security issues mentioned before, such as armed violence, grave human rights violations, etc., to the existing plan (Dunn, 2016). However, this would not acknowledge the politics of exclusion/inclusion in the NAP (Hudson, 2016).

A more respectful alternative would be to urgently redraft the NAP, acknowledging absences and exclusions made (Dunn, 2016). WPS architecture is a work in progress that caused a normative change (Basu, 2016). WPS has potential if it reflects specific local realities (ibid). The difficulties women and sexual/gender diversity populations encounter inside and outside their communities must be considered. The emphasis must be on the *violence continuum* and their visions of peace while appreciating the diversity of peace perspectives. All stages of NAP must provide scope for people's engagement to ensure they find a use for it. This may not necessarily align with diplomatic and military ways. However, inclusionary NAP writing means being open to non-dominant WPS projects. Active listening is requested to stop assuming that UNSCR 1325 is naturally appropriate for local peace practices (Dunn, 2016). Engagement of women and sexual/gender diversity must be through constant interaction and substantive consultation with those whom the plan is meant to benefit, avoiding tokenism and imposition (ibid). As a state-building project, NAP must not co-opt "gender advocacy in the local arena of peace and security" happening at the margins of WPS discourse (Basu, 2016).

NAP relies heavily upon gender mainstreaming. However, it exaggerates individual differences and underestimates differences at the structural and institutional levels. To avoid single-handed actions, this paper recommends the adoption of the intersectional methodology developed by Crenshaw. Intersectionality advances nuanced and contextualised analysis of gendered dimensions of insecurity and violence. Therefore, it is a relevant analytical tool for developing evidence-based interventions based on local needs of gendered insecurity, which the WPS framework seeks to address. Similarly, it allows us to simultaneously identify individual identity constructions and structure, organisational and institutional faults as it links diverse systems of oppression. Intersectionality is relevant if WPS officials intend to promote non-discriminatory and non-violence working environments in the military and seek to change historically vulnerabilised group status within the organisation.

Intersectional lenses reveal essentialisation and homogenisation of groups based on their identities. An intersectional perspective allows for "politics of plurality and multiplicity of locations and subjectivities" (Hudson, 2017). It seeks relations between different structures that marginalise and benefit. It looks at historical, local, and cultural factors (such as coloniality,

imperialism, macho culture, the political economy of war, sexual division of labour, etc.) to understand injustice.

Given the NAP multilateral emphasis, a critical feminist ethic of care provides a transformative vision of conducting relations in the international arena (Robinson, 2021). It questions universalising projects like liberal peacebuilding and liberal feminism radically. This perspective challenges the "realpolitik (including hyper-masculine nationalism)" present in the global system that maintains a liberal world order (ibid). It takes the transnational feminist networks seriously and calls to end the "binary gender norms that constitute the international" that reinforce the Western liberal domination mode such as militarism (ibid).

Diplomats should revise their intentions to "masculinise" Mexico through its participation in UNSC. The comeback to UNPKO and the increasing military international action owed to the interest in positioning the country as a relevant actor in global politics. However, this reproduces the gender hierarchies of "soft/weak/feminine" countries vs "hard/protective/masculine" states (ibid). Understanding "how these constructions are not essential or fixed but are instead fluid and open to rewriting and re-enactment" could help minimise aspirations that would add to relations of subordination and asymmetry in international security (ibid). Critical feminist ethics of care calls for empathy, interdependency, and repair between global actors.

Critical feminist ethics of care means building bridges to resolving international, national, and local contradictions. Then, diplomats should stop diverting the everyday insecurities faced in Mexico through multilateral action. The global loses its purpose if it does not rise from larger societal healing projects. It is necessary to acknowledge each "policy and programme on its terms and in its context and to recognise the ever-changing context of actors concerning multiple, intersecting locations and scales – across racial, socio-economic and ethnic divides and from the household to the 'global' level". As mentioned, there should be extensive work for the NAP to become a relevant policy. It requires efforts to imprint perspectives across government and people to whom these policies are meant to be beneficial to avoid institutionalising global politics' hierarchical relations.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

This paper described the Mexican government's engagement with WPS, which peak moment was the development of its first NAP. Moreover, it evaluated NAP content to see how policymakers localised the WPS global norms into the complex context of the country where multiple violences occur to identify its successes and unsuccess.

NAP was an end in itself. It was not an outcome of a larger policy goal of sustainable peace as it is framed. Instead, it is a foreign policy tool that sustains the elite diplomatic project of gendered state-building and liberal world order. The NAP was issued because it has a symbolic international value. Mexico's case exposes how NAP can help states to become more attractive to global security and to portray a gender-ally image. WPS commitment via NAP benefits from generating "soft/feminine" and "hard/masculine" power simultaneously (Robinson, 2021). Furthermore, it helps Mexican elites avoid external scrutiny over the growing extreme violence.

NAP resulted in an uninspiring policy within the larger policy context of Mexico; however, it alleviated lengthy disputes between diplomats and the military. NAP joined this two with INMUJERES and UN Women. Suppose these two institutions move forward with regular NAP conversations. In that case, there is an opportunity to influence the military to adopt a citizen or people-centred approach to security.

WPS can be utilised in a fragmented and constrained style by diplomatic, gender and military elites, so it was necessary to document when it is co-opted and reframed from its radical origins. For this reason, this research advocates for alternatives to the current content impregnated in the NAP:

1. Rewriting the plan. Policymakers can revive the feminist peace activists' ambitions that lobbied for UNSCR 1325 by meaningfully including women and sexual/gender diversity populations to amplify their concerns and repair the damage made by selecting an outward orientation and not considering them in the first place. Active listening and respect were encouraged to identify if local actors found uses in 1325.
2. Adopting intersectionality. Going beyond the liberal feminist methodology of gender mainstreaming. It was recommended to dismiss the binary and essentialist vision of men's and women's roles in the security sector. This research advised examining the sexist, classist, racist and colonial hierarchies that persist in the organisational culture of the military and police.
3. Changing "business as usual" of international relations multilateral action to one that does not reproduce gendered hierarchies. It was encouraged to adopt a critical feminist ethics of care that questions the unjust global politics that promotes middle-income countries like Mexico "man-up" through further participation in the hierarchical order of international security.

This investigation hopes that further interest arises from Mexico's NAP. The task of overcoming liberal feminist and liberal peace universalist projects is overwhelming. However, research about people's everyday refusal of these two in Mexico could help shift the spotlight to other ways of peace and gender, like critical feminism, the political economy of sexual violence and postcolonial feminism.

Appendix I: List of semi-structured interview participants

List of semi-structured interview participants			
Number	Name	Institution	Job title
1	■	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (SRE)	■
2	■	Secretariat of National Defence (SEDENA)	■
3	■	Secretariat of Navy (SEMAR)	■
4	■	Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection (SSPC)	■
5	■	National Institute of Women (INMUJERES)	■
6	■	UN Women Mexico	■
7	■	Permanent Mission of Mexico to the United Nations in Mexico	■
8	Cecilia Lazara (She/her)	Global Network of Women Peacebuilders (Global North Civil Society)	Regional Focal Point for Latin America
9	Daira Arana (She/her)	Global Thought MX (Mexican think tank)	Director General
10	Dainzu López (She/her)	University of las Americas Puebla	Full time Professor of International Relations and Consultant of the Elsie Initiative
11	María Fernanda de la Cruz (She/her)	University of las Americas Puebla	Bachelor student who did a thesis on Mexico's NAP
12	■	Red Viral Nacional (private consultant, implementer of the MUCPAZ programme)	■

Appendice II: Template semi-structured questionnaire

Questions

Background

1. What is the engagement of the Secretariat of National Defence with the Women, Peace, and Security Agenda since 2000 (when the UNSCR1325 was adopted) to the date?

Planning of the NAP

2. Which role played the Secretariat of (X) in the development of the NAP?
3. When did the drafting process of the NAP start?
4. Which areas aside from Secretariat of (X) participated in the drafting of the NAP?
5. How was the drafting process of the NAP?
6. Which Mexican public policy format does the NAP have (Acuerdo, Decreto, Reglamento, etc.)?
7. How did the priorities or policy areas of the NAP were identified? Do you think these are aligned according to Mexico's national and local context?
8. What does the resource allocation of NAP look like?

Implementation

9. How many staff from Secretariat of (X) and from which areas/department (Unidad, Dirección General, Subsecretaria, etc) work on the implementation of the NAP?
10. What role plays the Secretariat of (X) in the Working group of the NAP?
11. How regularly do the Working group meets and what does it discuss?
12. What are the mechanisms, tools and resources for monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) of the NAP? Which role does Secretariat of (X) play in the MEL?
13. What had been the challenges of the implementation of the NAP?
14. How does the localization of the NAP look like at one year of implementation?
15. Will the NAP be updated regularly? which mechanisms are available for its modification?

Potentialities

16. What would you say are the strengths and standouts of the NAP?
17. What would you say are the main differences and similarities of Mexico's NAP with other Latin American countries' NAPs?

Shortcomings

18. What would you say are the areas of opportunity for the NAP?

Appendice III: Timeline: Specific events that influenced the development of Mexico's NAP

<i>Timeline: Specific events that influenced the development of Mexico's NAP</i>		
	Year	Event
Mexico resumed its participation in the UN Peacekeeping Operations	2015	Mexico recapitulates its participation in the UN Peacekeeping Operations by deploying observers in the UN Mission in Western Sahara and general staff officers at the UN Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH)(ALCOPAZ, 2020).
	2016	Mexico deploys the first military women in a UN Peacekeeping Operation (ALCOPAZ, 2020).
	2018	Mexico Opens Joint Training Center for Peacekeeping Operations (SRE, 2020).
President Andrés Manuel López Obrador deepened the scope of the armed forces' activities, contributing to the militarisation of the state, society, and politics.	2006	Former president Felipe Calderón declared "war" against cartels by deploying the armed forces in the cities. It is the first measure of implementing a militarised security policy after the democratic transition (WOLA, 2022).
	2008	The military operations are intensified, and the SEDENA and the SEMAR's budget allocation is increased. Security cooperation between Mexico and the United States enlarges by authorising an upgrade in the number of US DEA agents operating in the country alongside the Mexican armed forces and opening three regional border offices (Deare, 2021).
	2014	Former President Peña Nieto announces the creation of the Mexican National Gendarmerie, a body aimed at preparing a hybrid police unit under military command and training, specialising in reducing the power of organised crime and drug cartels (Deare, 2021).
	2019	President Andrés Manuel López Obrador dissolves the Mexican National Gendarmerie and sends to Congress approval of the Law of the National Guard. A body composed of armed forces and Federal Police agents that operate under the command of SEDENA and SSPC (WOLA, 2022).
	2020	President Andrés Manuel López Obrador issues an executive order to strengthen the power of the military to participate in public security tasks (WOLA, 2022).
	2020	President Andrés Manuel López Obrador gives the military the responsibility of building infrastructure projects, including a new airport and the <i>Mayan Train</i> . Also, he commands armed

		forces to take care of banking centres, and other social programmes like the COVID-19 vaccination plan, among others (HRW, 2022).
	2022	Congress approves legislative reforms to pass the operations, resource allocation and administrative control of the National Guard to SEDENA only. The reforms dissolve the federal civilian police force, expanding the role of the armed forces in citizen security (OHCHR, 2022).
The Secretariat of Foreign Affairs adopts a Feminist Foreign Policy building up on the long-standing tradition of Mexico of promoting women's human rights worldwide	1975	Mexico City becomes the host of the World Conference on Women and the International Women's Year.
	1975	The Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace is adopted in Mexico City.
	1995	Mexico subscribes to the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action.
	1996	Mexico presents its first National Action Plan to implement the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action.
	2000	The UN Security Council adopted the UNSCR 1325, and Mexico celebrates it.
	2001-2008	The Mexican legal framework enlarges to set mechanisms to promote and protect women's rights following international treaties: the Law of the National Institute of Women, the Federal Law to Prevent and Eliminate Discrimination, the General Law for Equality between Women and Men, the General Law on Women's Access to a Life Free from Violence and the decriminalisation of the abortion in Mexico City (INMUJERES, 2018).
	2008	The Human Rights Promotion and Protection Unit of SEMAR is created to monitor and disseminate information on gender equality, human rights, harassment, and sexual harassment (SEMAR, 2022).
	2011	Congress passes a Constitutional amendment to create a new atmosphere for human rights protection by adopting international standards and the pro homine principle (INMUJERES, 2018). Following that reform, the Mexican foreign policy principles present in article 89 of the constitutes are reformed, adding the promotion and protection of human rights as a foreign policy principle.

	2011	The Agreement for creating an Observatory for Equality between Women and Men in the Mexican Army and Air Force of SEDENA was published (Márquez, 2018).
	2016	Mexico joins UN Women's flagship programme, Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls Initiative, which aims to eliminate sexual violence in public spaces (UN Women, 2016).
	2020	Mexico presents its Feminist Foreign Policy (SRE, 2020)
	2021	Mexico becomes co-host and co-organiser of the Generation Equality Forum to update and elevate commitments made by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (SRE, 2021).
	2021	Mexico issues its first <i>National Action Plan in Follow-up to UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security</i> (SRE, 2021)
	2021	Mexico becomes a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and co-chairs the Informal Working Group on WPS (SRE, 2021).

Appendice IV: Fritz, et al., (2011) NAP analysis methodology

Fritz, et al., (2011) NAP analysis methodology		
Criteria	Description	Mexico's NAP content
Enactment date	The document lists its publication date	January 11, 2021
Length	The document needs 25–30 pages to cover the minimal structure requirements recommended by the UN Secretary-General	25 pages in total. Ten pages of primary content and 15 pages of three annexes: Annex 1 is about the National Regulatory Framework, Annex 2 is about the International Regulatory Framework, and Annex 3 is about Critical Path for the Implementation.
Preparation period	It refers to the amount of time that the national government spent to prepare the document	The interview participant from SRE stated that "the development of the NAP took around one year of consultation and consensus among all the members of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group".
Plan period	The specified period that the plan covers	The NAP states "The structure and scope of the NAP-1325 will be reviewed three years after its adoption" (SRE, 2021).
Timeline for implementation	Specific timing of identified actions within the plan period	None of the 21 activities has a specific and detailed implementation period. The Critical Path for the Implementation lacks a time indicator.
Agents that were involved in preparation	Plans must provide information about the agents that were involved in the preparation to understand why some specific topics are or are not included in the plan	Working Group of Peacekeeping Operations confirmed by: 1. Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (chair) 2. Secretariat of National Defence (which encompasses the Army and the Air Force) 3. Secretariat of the Navy 4. Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection National Institute for Women (non-permanent member) 5. Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit (non-permanent member) 6. Office of the Presidency of the Republic (non-permanent member) 7. UN Women Mexico (observer)
Agents that led the process	Plans should mention the lead agencies to facilitate monitoring and evaluation	Secretariat of Foreign Affairs (Department of Peacekeeping of the Directorate General of the UN from the Deputy Secretariat for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights). However, other members of the NAP's Inter-Secretariat Working Group provided technical support: - Secretariat of National Defence - Secretariat of the Navy - Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection - National Institute for Women (non-permanent member) - Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit (non-permanent member) - Office of the Presidency of the Republic (non-permanent member) - UN Women Mexico (observer)

Contents in comparison to what is specified in the UNSCR 1325	NAP drafters should consider the 13 statements related to member states that are in UNSCR 1325 when developing the document. By doing this, none of the basic areas will be overlooked	The NAP structure follows the United Nations Secretary-General's recommendations of the main pillars of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda: 1.Prevention 2.Participation 3.Protection 4.Relief and Recovery
Level of activities	The specified implementation level	International, national and subnational.
Priority areas	A specific implementation process, for what can be a demanding, large-scale task, may move more quickly if priorities are determined	In its purpose statement, the NAPs mention the following topics "humanitarian assistance, disarmament, reintegration and arms control; attention to sexual and gender-based violence, strengthening of institutions and the rule of law" (SRE, 2021). However, its line of actions mentions "UN Peacekeeping Operations and Special political missions, as well as in humanitarian relief operations".
Implementation agents	Mapping of the different agents involved	The following members of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group are mentioned in the Critical Path for Implementation and the first report of activities as Institutions in charge of operationalisation: 1. Secretariat of Foreign Affairs 2. Secretariat of National Defence 3. Secretariat of the Navy 4. Secretariat of Security and Citizen Protection 5. National Institute for Women 6. UN Women Mexico
Specificity about the roles of different departments	Specificity about the roles and responsibilities of the different agents	The plan of action defines the roles and responsibilities of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group as a whole. The Critical Path for Implementation enlists which members of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group participate in each line of action. Nor per activity. Notably, the plan leaves a hole in the role of the Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit and Office of the Presidency of the Republic, which two interview participants mentioned they often participate in the Inter-Secretariat Working Group meetings. In the case of the Secretariat of Finance and Public Credit, it has a critical role in the NAP funding, and it still needs to be mentioned in the NAP.
Communication/cooperation of agents:	Specific information about the roles of those involved in the implementation processes	The NAP provides a list of responsibilities of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group. This entity oversees the implementation of the NAP and its monitoring, follow-up, and evaluation. Two interview participants said that meetings are held regularly, and communication runs smoothly.
Performance measurements	Identifies the elements that determine the success of the plan	The NAP performance measurement is quantitative in design, requiring members of the two Inter-Secretariat Working Groups to summarise the activities corresponding to the relevant line of actions and activities within the document. A major shortcoming is that the critical path of implementation needs to reference financial, time

		framework or human resourcing. For this reason, the first performance report presents a series of outputs instead of outcomes that connect activities to measures. Similarly, some indicators like the number of trainings among police and military forces “can be quantitatively measured but are hard to assess in qualitative terms” (Philipson and Velasco, 2021).
Reporting and feedback	Reporting and feedback processes should be included in plans as they are important to assess performance and for the further development of plan	The NAP mentions that the Inter-Secretariat Working Group is responsible for "review and update the contents of the Plan in light of the evolution of the Women Peace and Security Agenda, review and update the indicators of the NAP-1325 and ensure dialogue with other relevant institutions and establish mechanisms with international organisations, academia, civil society and other actors for the implementation of the lines of action" (SRE, 2021). However, reporting and feedback methodologies and mechanisms need to be more detailed.
Financial allocation	At least a general financial framework should be set in relation to the priority of activities and implementation of the plans	The NAP contains a financing section. However, the language is vague as it does not describe the budget line on the Federal Expenditure Budget. It leaves the budget open to consideration by each member of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group. Similarly, it refers to the support of international cooperation.
Age sensitivity	Women and girls and other beneficiaries of the plan should be mentioned throughout the document	The NAP has an extensive view of the "target groups". It mentions women and girls and "groups in vulnerable situations" (SRE, 2021). However, it does not enlist activities for the "groups in vulnerable situations", nor does it describe who these groups are.
Level of involvement of civil society	The document should describe the role of civil society in the development, implementation, evaluation, and revision	NAP refers to civil society participation in the line of action of involvement. It says that "the Mexican government commits itself to hold multilateral forums and meetings attended by women officials, experts or civil society representatives" (SRE, 2021). Nevertheless, all interview participants stated that there was no formal mechanism to ensure civil society's consultation or substantive participation in the development, implementation, and monitoring of the NAP.
Geographic specificity	Identify national and/or international geographic priorities or, at least, indicate that priorities will be set.	The spatial location of the NAP is the international arena (particularly the UN System) and the Mexican territory. Municipalities are mentioned but need to be specified. In Mexico, there are 2446 municipalities.
Advertisement/Public Relations	Informing the public about UNSCR 1325 supports the implementation and evaluation processes	NAP needs to mention specific activities to disseminate the document and to raise awareness among different audiences. In the first report on implementation (section on the line of action of prevention), the impact results relied solely upon carrying out activities such as media interviews, podcast recordings, magazine articles, and academic conferences in which SEDENA participated to campaign on the NAP (SRE, 2021).

Appendix V. Summary of the policy recommendations

Mexico's first *National Action Plan to Follow Up on Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on "Women, Peace and Security"* (NAP) is a step in the right direction and responds to the Mexican civil society's call for the government to incorporate a gender perspective in security governance and peacebuilding. The NAP offers a formal structure for holding the government responsible. This research provided relevant information regarding the plan's areas of opportunity. A list of recommendations to advance the national Women, Peace and Security (WPS) implementation in alignment with the feminist activist ambition that lobbied for the approval of UNSCR 1325:

To the NAP's Inter-Agency Group:

1. Adopt an inward orientation to the WPS, deprioritising international engagement and foreign policy strategies. Reconceptualise security to deal with multiple non-traditional threats. Recognise the extreme violence existing in the country and develop actions to address it.
2. Improve information systems to accurately and timely diagnose and measure the drivers of violence and the gendered impacts of insecurity, poor livelihood, and violence.
3. Be informed and inspired by critical methodologies and perspectives in all stages of the NAP, like intersectionality, feminist peace and critical feminist ethics of care approaches.
4. Adjust NAP priorities to meet local needs and priorities, such as emerging security topics. Some of these are growing militarisation, increased availability of small arms and light weapons, poor institutional and territorial control of organised crime, impunity and corruption, lack of trust in government, transitional justice, flaws in criminal justice, restrictive immigration policies, extractivism, attacks and criminalisation of human rights defenders and journalists, lack of care policies, among others.
5. Redesign the critical path of the implementation chart for the indicators to be directly related to the strategic goals, lines of action activities and institutions in charge. All variables need to be interconnected for readers to understand how the table links one step to the next. Define which institution is responsible for implementing activities.
6. Include the participation of other government offices with peacebuilding, women and sexual/gender diversity rights and security competence to participate in the Inter-Agency Group's meeting and to the plan's renewal process in 2024 like Secretariat of Governance (SEGOB), the National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination (CONAPRED), Executive Secretariat of the National Public Security System, National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence against Women (CONAVIM) Security and Justice Commission of the National Governors' Conference, among others.
7. Develop consultation mechanisms to involve, learn from and dialogue with peace and human rights activists in NAP processes from drafting to implementation and monitoring. Promote and hold space for diverse feminist voices while developing safe strategies to protect their participation.
8. Allocate specific human and financial resources for NAP processes from drafting to implementation and monitoring.
9. Initiate a formal public policy process aligned to the national legal framework in 2024 for the plan's update in 2024.
10. Facilitate a co-creation process with civil society and the expanded cabinet to update the plan in 2024.

To SEDENA and SEMAR:

1. Recognise "the value of civilian tasks and the need to decouple violence, military practices, and combat skills from masculinity" (Newby and Sebag, 2021).
2. Make public your protocols on Attention, Prevention and Sanction of Sexual Harassment.
3. Make public your surveys on cultural and organisational environment perception.
4. Increase financial and human resources of the Human Rights Promotion and Protection Unit of SEMAR and Observatory for Equality between Women and Men in the Mexican Army and Air Force of SEDENA. Strengthen their competence and action.
5. Research and design evidence-based actions on the structural barriers that limit the possibilities of potential historically discriminated groups recruits.
6. Research and design evidence-based interventions about sociodemographic characteristics of your recruits, such as indigenous, afro, or tribal affiliation, sexual orientation and gender identity, skin colour, the prevalence of disability, socioeconomic status, as well as other characteristics that may influence the incidence of violence and/or discrimination against them. Based on this, create an instrument that could capture the differentiated impact of aggressions in the army, air force and navy depending on the particularities of their recruits.
7. Address the gendered and racist divisions of labour that exclude historically marginalised groups from combat roles, senior rank positions and certain specialities through reforming the current labour opportunities and organisational structure. Ensure equal redistribution of opportunities, roles, and responsibilities among all personnel, acknowledge the valuable input of historically marginalised groups into the work of the military, and ensure that affirmative action's foster representation of traditionally marginalised groups in the institutions.
8. Make public all versions of the Elsie Initiative report.
9. Research "how men respond to the hyper-masculine norms perpetuated by the military structure" and how "women confront and deal with violence and conflict as agents in security institutions" (Newby and Sebag, 2021).

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