



## Press release

Thursday, March 6, 2014

### **Focus on Gender Responsive Policing and Security**

Mixed-gender international policing in Afghanistan and Iraq and empowering policewomen in Kosovo are among the topics to be discussed at a gender-responsive policing and security event in New York.

The International Association of Women Police (IAWP) and United Nations Women National Committee UK (NC UK) are collaborating in a joint panel discussion to be held on March 12 in parallel with the United Nation's 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) which will take place at nearby UN Headquarters.

Jan Grasty, President of UN Women NC UK, said: "Recognition of gender-responsive policing and security deserves to be given a high priority. Our event highlights the importance of gender-skilled, accountable policing and security to move on the Millennium Development Goals post-2015.

"Without proper security and policing the poorest women and girls in society will be unable to take advantage of improved schooling, training, healthcare and development programmes designed to empower and move them out of poverty. We will focus on the 'universal' security and safety needs of women and girls."

Key areas that will be covered by the event are:

- the challenges of access to justice and legal redress implementing gender-responsive policing
- empowering and retaining policewomen
- the benefits of mixed-gendered international policing

Speakers will refer to their own experiences of international policing in challenging and fragile states.

Jane Townsley, President of the International Association of Women Police, will speak on implementing gender responsive policing in Afghanistan, Kosovo and the Lebanon.

*More...*

Jane, a recently retired police Chief Inspector who is based in Yorkshire, UK, said: "Ensuring policing is gender sensitive is not just a matter of recruiting more women there are more fundamental requirements to achieve real change.

"During the presentation the benefits of establishing and joining women's associations in policing and the wider security sector will be explored. There is an important role for associations to play in gender responsive policing, changing cultures and thereby improving service delivery to communities."

Case studies will be used to illustrate challenges faced by policewomen in Afghanistan as well as the impact of access to professional development and empowerment of women officers in the Lebanon Security Force, the United Arab Emirates and Kosovo.

Among the speakers will be IAWP 2nd Vice President Stephanie Harding, who has worked as a police advisor in many countries including Afghanistan. She said: "Afghanistan has powerful civil norms about the roles of women in society. When a woman applies to become a police officer to serve her country she must go through a rigorous process of approval before she can even enter or graduate from a police academy. This includes approval from but not limited to: her husband, father, grandfather, Elders, Shura, Malik or Mullahs."

Anyone attending the event on March 12 will have the opportunity to hear from a range of speakers who are highly experienced in the field of gender-responsive policing. The event, to be held in the Guild Hall of the Armenian Convention Centre (630 2nd Avenue at 35th Street, New York) will be moderated by Dr Tuula Nieminen of the UN Women NC UK. The speakers are:

**Introduction and Background to the topic**

Barbara Cleary, *Chair, UN WOMEN NC UK London Committee*

**UN WOMEN Policy, Policing and Security: post-2015 era**

Saraswathi Menon, *Director, Policy Division, UN WOMEN Headquarters*

**Implementing Gender-responsive Policing**

**(Afghanistan, Lebanon, Kosovo)**

Jane Townsley, *President of International Association of Women Police (IAWP)*

**Working with UN WOMEN: Empowering Policewomen in Kosovo**

Julia Jaeger, *European Coordinator for IAWP*

**Mixed-gendered International Policing: who benefits?**

**(Iraq, Afghanistan, UAE)**

Stephanie Harding, *2nd Vice-President IAWP, USA*

**For further information, photo and interviews please contact Melanie Hill at Integrity PR by email [mel@integritypr.co.uk](mailto:mel@integritypr.co.uk) or call 07527 847423.**

**Notes to Editors:**

1. For further information about the IAWP please visit [www.iawp.org](http://www.iawp.org)
2. For further information about UN Women NC UK please visit [www.ukwomenuk.org](http://www.ukwomenuk.org)

