



Press release

Wednesday, April 9, 2014

More Support Needed for Safety and Security of Women and Women Police Officers Internationally

Two organisations charged with highlighting issues faced by women across the world have joined forces to promote safety and security for women and girls internationally.

The International Association of Women Police (IAWP) and UN Women National Committee UK (NC UK) have formed closer ties recommending that more steps should be taken to support women police officers internationally to prevent violence against women and girls.

The two organisations hosted a joint event at the House of Commons in London last month to discuss the outcomes of the two organisations' joint panel discussion on gender responsive policing and security, which was held in New York in March.

Speakers at the New York event, which was held in parallel with the United Nation's 58th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), included international experts on mixed gender responsive policing.

Outcomes and recommendations discussed in London included that:

- Security Sector Reform (SSR) budgets need to allocate greater funds to Violence against Women and Girls prevention (the current allocation is less than 1%).
- Current UN Women programmes build on indigenous peace and conflict reconciliation mechanisms to better reflect citizen security models.
- Future gender-responsive policing programmes need to ensure women officers are equipped with the skills and capacity needed to undertake such roles particularly in relation to low literacy rates in some countries such as Afghanistan.
- International police forces must be aware of internalised patriarchy when investing in male champions and male engagement efforts.
- Gender-responsive policing strategies must avoid perpetuating damaging stereotypes, e.g. pushing women officers towards soft skills training.

More...

Jane Townsley, President of the IAWP, said: "Greater visibility of women police officers reassures female citizens that their specific needs will be met. Police women in many countries can now enjoy equal status to their male counterparts but, unfortunately, that is not the case everywhere. This is why the IAWP promotes greater female recruitment alongside strategic policy making with the emphasis not only on grassroots visibility for women, but lobbying influencers and decision makers for change."

"The IAWP's educational conferences and holistic scholarship programmes for women police officers stand as an invaluable tool aiding their entry into police forces."

Jan Grasty, President of UN Women NC UK, said: "Security must be at the forefront of change in the lives of women. It is important that we go beyond just writing laws, there must be lasting implementation of gender-responsive security and policing mechanisms. We need to create platforms to share and link global experiences of security with the hope of cascading successful initiatives to fit local needs."

"It is also vitally important that men are involved in this process ensuring that gender responsive policing is successful because of the buy-in of all involved."

The IAWP and UN Women (NC) UK will now work together towards the mainstreaming of gender responsive policing into global aid programmes.

For further information, photo and interviews please contact Melanie Hill at Integrity PR by email mel@integritypr.co.uk or call 07527 847423.

Notes to Editors:

1. For further information about the IAWP please visit www.iawp.org
2. For further information about UN Women NC UK please visit www.ukwomenuk.org