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Why should there be an international body for security, consisting of women, or Women's Security Council?

From my own point of view and my personal experience, the reason for such an international body of political, ethical and social control would be related to the gender outcome of the wars in Yugoslavia, which have split the population into the two large groups, with radically different views, ideologies, practices, and anthropology of war: men and women. Even with the evident floating of mentalities (some belligerous women, some pacifist men), this remained a general picture of the gender division before, during, and after the Yugoslav wars. In my and other women's research in these topics, this was due to the complex historic, cultural, anthropological, and social situation in this specific region. As we were following the current trends in thinking gender, this obviously complied with the actual theoretical models of interpretation, especially that the gender is constructed or performed in and by culture, but at the same time it made us very cautious about any generalization. The recent Yugoslav case might not be identical with other war situations around the world. However, it can provide for some rather convincing arguments when the idea of Women's Security Council is put on the table. My intention would be to tackle the possible negative reactions to this idea, and to challenge some of the stereotypes concerning participation and empowerment of women on the highest level world politics. Among these stereotypes, one deserves a special attention: it is a rhetorical strategy which manipulates an otherwise sane and arguable thinking, pointing to the fact that women are not less aggressive or less inclined to violent solutions of social and political problems than men, which is often successfully exemplified in several women politicians of our times. Yes, women are not »by nature« less aggressive and more pacifist. Because they are not different from men, they should have equal participation in modelling the world politics, and since they are almost completely excluded from the level of decision on war(s), they should have an international body of their own. This body should discuss, expose, and decide on matters of women's position and women's politics concerning wars, because women are **by culture** differently positioned (constructed), treated, and identified in wars. A large majority of women on this planet are still prone to be victims rather than aggressors in the wars; their inter-human relations (family, motherhood) are formed in such a way that wars present a direct threat to their social functioning. Among the differences that speak in favor of a gender-defined Security Council, there is also a possibility of special women's gains in wars, like the global emancipation of women after WW I, and after WWII in some countries which experienced the revolutionary, mainly socialist changes. In short, wars are bad but can also be good for women and their rights, and in many examples we know of, this does not relate to the losses and gains of men in a parallel way. If women could discuss the same war threats in their own political body, and on the same international level of importance, the problems would be, at least, looked at from two radically different points of view, which would finally cover the whole, not only the half of world's population. Women's participation in presenting problems and solutions, being so different, could certainly not be decorative, only for the sake of equal representation, but of substantial importance for a wise decision-making in the most serious matters. Peace making practices and strategies, developed by many women's communities in many highly challenging situations could help a lot in controlling and calming down the risky areas and moments.

I would go on arguing that women have to have such an international body on the highest level of deciding with the help of several examples from the Yugoslav war which, in my opinion, confirm the thesis that women's pacifism is largely conditioned by a repressive patriarchal or other male domination socio-cultural models. Founding Women's Security Council would

therefore be not only a gesture of re-establishing balance of rights and participation, but a considerable enlargement of ideas, solutions, and practices of working on peace, due to the inclusion of highly experienced specialists in seeking alternative ways to live in peace.