

THE DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD LECTURE 2012

Women's Participation in the Sustainable World



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Preface

On 6 May 2013, Eva Åkesson, the Rector of Uppsala University, opened the 14th annual Dag Hammarskjöld Lecture proceedings in the crowded university main auditorium. The Lecture was presented by the former President of the Republic of Finland, Tarja Halonen. The annual lecture in previous years was given by Mary Robinson, Brian Urquhart, Joseph Rotblat, Kofi Annan, Lakhdar Brahimi, Mamphela Ramphele, Noeleen Heyzer, Hans Blix, Sture Linnér/Sverker Åström, Martti Ahtisaari, Karen AbyZayd, Francis Deng, and Jan Eliasson.

President Halonen's lecture, entitled *Women's Participation in the Sustainable World*, was attended by a large audience and was followed by a lively conversation between Ms. Halonen and the audience. The lecture was preceded by an informal seminar on Women and Conflict co-organized by the Nordic Africa Institute, the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, and the Department of Peace and Conflict Research of Uppsala University.

The guidelines for the Hammarskjöld lecture stipulate that the lecture is given in memory of Dag Hammarskjöld, the second Secretary-General of the United Nations, and in recognition of the values that inspired him as Secretary-General and generally in his life – compassion, humanism and commitment to international solidarity and cooperation. They also state that the lecture will be offered to a personality who in significant and innovative ways contributes to a more just, peaceful and environmentally sustainable world through valuable achievements in politics or research.

The choice of president Halonen is therefore an obvious one, taking into account her dedicated work and important contributions on human rights, poverty eradication, peace and global sustainability. The lecture's focus on women and global challenges is well in line with Dag Hammarskjöld's work and thinking on social and economic equality, addressing a gender dimension that still calls for advocacy.

Tarja Halonen is the first woman to hold the highest office in Finland. In her speech, she generously shares her experience from the years as president, 2000 to 2012, and as a parliamentarian. She explains Nordic feminism and how equality between men and women is rooted in a joint struggle for survival. Still much needs to be improved, including fair competition in elections. Ms. Halonen advises women in other regions to strive for improved participation in political life as well as in education and work life.

A strong advocate for all human rights, Ms. Halonen makes a pledge for sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as for labour rights, both key areas in a globalized world. Her engagement in population issues is underlined as she explains how the recent High Level task Force on population and development aims to contribute to the implementation of commitments made already 20 years ago on, for example, in the area of reproductive health.

To explain how women as politicians can make a true difference, President Halonen gives the example of how she, as a Foreign Minister, together with her Swedish colleague Lena Hjelm-Wallén, introduced civilian capacities in the EU security policies and crisis management. She considers the two of them as ‘odd birds’ in the male-dominated group of foreign ministers. She, furthermore, states that even so they were able to move the concept of crisis management into a more civilian approach, something that today is thought of as natural.

The speech ends with a call to the many young women and men present in the university auditorium:

‘We cannot expect change if we don’t try! I feel it is now time for a new world!’

Annika Söder
Executive Director
Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation

Peter Wallensteen
Senior Professor of Peace and Conflict Research
[Dag Hammarskjöld Professor 1985-2012]
Uppsala University





'It's a very interesting fact that current armed conflicts, mainly, have been made by men, while the vast majority of victims are women and children. On the other hand, involving women in peace building has just begun. In my view, we need both men and women to build peace.'



Tarja Halonen and Vice-Chancellor Eva Åkesson

Women's Participation in the Sustainable World

Tarja Halonen

I will start very unofficially. I have a lot of good memories from my years as a student politician in the late 1960's, when all of Europe wanted to democratise the university. But we also enjoyed ourselves a lot outside of lectures. I also had the pleasure to be here in Uppsala. So, enjoy the life!

I will start with some words of encouragement. You might hear sometimes, dear students, and those of you who were students once, that the roles of men and women have developed over a very long period of time. In that light it is safe to say that we won't be able to change them very fast. That's just a fact. But it is worth trying. I always say that we women are the daughters of Eve. The role of women varies in different religions, but I think a common denominator in all our different religions is that the role of women often has been strictly limited. So, it is not surprising that the stereotypes of our generation are very strong.

The Nordic sisters – the five Nordic sisters. Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark and Iceland – we have a lot of benefits that you don't see everywhere in the world. Sometimes I have been faced with the question: Why? And I always answer that in the Northern hemisphere the fight for survival demanded every person's contribution, both in regards to work

and mutual trust, illustrating clearly the need for both men and women to survive.

All nations have their own traditions. Many countries have difficulties that can be attributed to a broken national tradition or for instance the effects of colonialism. But traditions are made by people and can be made again by people. So you have to decide for yourself whether you want to keep all traditions. If you feel that some of them aren't fair you have the possibility to establish new traditions.

But let's address the subject more deeply. The modern type of political decision making systems was developed everywhere much later. Decision-making traditionally has been the right of free men – this common traditional model can still be found almost everywhere.

Equal rights for men and women to vote and run as a candidate in elections were established quite early in the Nordic countries, in Finland as early as 1906, in Sweden soon after, in 1921. In many countries the system is still in the process of developing, and I underline: formal legal rights are a good start, but it's not enough – winning elections demands money, networks and know-how.

It's very important to take into account the big picture of the political system: democracy, human rights, rule of law, what you call 'rättsstat' in Swedish, and good governance. Each part of the system affects the other parts, as well as the position of women.

In a political democracy both the emancipation of women and the electoral system have significance. In a list election, the main pressure needs to be put on the political parties. Sweden and Norway are good examples of how you can boost gender equality rapidly within this system. In Finland's case, where we vote for a sole candidate, the situation is slightly different, and we have different tactics.

And, we also say that the nomination of candidates is important, but equal attention needs to be paid to the election campaigns. Women's campaign budgets are generally smaller than men's, and this is illustrated by the candidates' media visibility during the electoral campaign. The situation seems to be worse in countries with electoral districts of one single seat. Of course the same situation applies to all elections with just one seat available, like for example the presidential election in Finland.

If you are interested in this subject, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has made some good research in this sector, research that could be useful also for the work with Northern Africa and the Middle East, where democratization processes are in progress at the moment. Women were distinctly in the picture when the Arab spring started in Tunisia, and later continued in Egypt, Yemen and other countries. But the subsequent development has not been as convincing.

The countries in the MENA area are different, but co-operation on gender issues could be successful at least in some of them. I am interested in learning what the Anna Lindh Foundation in Egypt has done in this sector.

I know from my own experience that the level of education of women is pretty high in many MENA countries, but what is interesting is that women are not represented to the same extent in working life. The society – or should I say men – is not prepared to help with the integration of family responsibilities and work.

So, I'm guessing that information regarding the positive effect that women's empowerment in the working life has on the GDP could speed up the development process even more than if you use only human rights as an argument, as important as they are.

Studies carried out by the Nordic Council show that the entry of women into the labour markets led to a growth of 40% in the 1970's. Of course this figure varies in different countries, but they are nevertheless remarkable figures.

The same fact was noticed in the High Level Panel, which made the report for the Rio+20-summit. The report was also accepted by the Rio summit.

So...does it make any difference, then, when men and women are more equally represented in political life?

The Nordic welfare society is, in my view, largely the result of both men and women participating in political decision-making and in working life. The society has co-operated with families so that children, the elderly and

others in need of special care can receive adequate services. And the fact that society takes on a social responsibility doesn't mean that individuals in the north have a weaker sense of responsibility.

Another issue I'd like to address is that as family sizes diminish a quality children's day-care system can play various positive roles: It provides play-mates and better learning opportunities for the children and gives the parents a sense of reassurance regarding their children's safety. The pre-school system in Finland has worked excellently as preparation for the compulsory education, which starts rather late, internationally compared, at the age of seven.

The good results of the Finnish educational system, as shown in the Pisa Studies, have created a lot of interest in various countries. The Finnish educational system has already been exported, for example to some Arab countries. Finnish schools have also been established in the area and I think that might also stir interest around the Finnish way of life. Of course, every country has its own character, but it will be very interesting to see if the import of our educational system will have implications in these countries.

Rights and obligations have not been shared justly, not within the family anyway. Generally women have responsibilities while men have rights. Consequently, the difficulty to combine work outside of home with family responsibilities is so far mostly the women's predicament, and solutions should therefore be tailored to this situation.

I have had a very interesting morning in the Nordic Africa Institute here in Uppsala, and I think that some of my good friends there would say

that there's also a different way of looking at things; men may have all the power outside of the family, but in return many women have a lot of power within the families. So let's speak about that.

I don't hesitate to encourage our men to participate more in caring work, without fear of losing their masculinity. But we have found good ways to encourage that, and Swedish men are a very good example. For example combining work and family life in a harmonious manner has improved through the transformation of maternity leave to parental leave. I think that you Swedes should share more of this success story internationally.

All this is also important for our common future. We need to work towards a sustainable development. We need more love and care than hate and fight.

At the Rio+20 Conference held last summer, it was unanimously agreed upon once again that the goals of sustainable development couldn't be reached without full participation of women. The role of women in providing food and water in the developing countries is often forgotten in statistics, and should be taken more into account, both when it comes to agricultural and food security issues. That could contribute to a new and more sustainable development.

The role of women in consumption decisions is a theme on the rise all around the world. Women in the OECD countries do about 80 % of the households' daily shopping. They also constitute the majority in many work places – schools, day-care centres, homes for the elderly, hospitals,

shops and so on – and are therefore in a position to make energy savings and concrete saving choices.

Population dynamics definitely matter when it comes to sustainable development, but this still seems to be a very sensitive issue in negotiations. It is precisely in the area of sexual and reproductive health and rights that the unequal position of women is most obvious. This is a key human rights issue for half of the humanity. The deficiencies in women's rights was reflected last winter in the brutal gang rape in India, which led to the victim's death, as well as in the shooting of a schoolgirl in Pakistan earlier that year, the case of Malala.

Of course, these are tragic events, but nothing that hasn't happened before. The positive feature in these sad stories is the strong reaction by public opinion and subsequent large demonstrations of support for the victims.

Sexual rights are still very difficult to promote in all countries, even in our own. The specifics of course vary from country to country, but it takes courage to be active in this sector.

Equal marriage laws have been afoot in many countries, and I'm extremely happy that President Obama has taken such a clear and brave approach to equal marriage laws. I am sad to say that development in all European countries is not as good. On the contrary, discrimination concerning sexual minorities is sometimes even stronger than earlier. And the issue of the right to safe abortion is equally difficult in many countries.

Of course, the population growth on our planet is linked to sexual and reproductive health and rights. We have exceeded a population of 7 billion,

and during the next thirty years the population will grow further – up to 9 or 10 billion.

The paper I have in my hand is pertinent to this issue. It's the outcome of ICPD – International Conference in Population and Development in Cairo in 1994. The conference and the Action Plan deal with this connection. It's an excellent paper. The problem is that promises have not been implemented properly.

Now, twenty years later we should use the window of opportunity before us. In 2014 the United Nations will have a special session in the General Assembly around this issue. And of course Sustainable Development Goals and the Goals of Post 2015 should also underpin Human Rights to a much greater extent than earlier, including Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights.

Here I have also a new report of the High Level Task Force of ICPD and it states very simply that information, education and access to services are the core issues of Reproductive and Sexual Health and Rights, still today. The Task Force was independent, but I hope that UNFPA and other relevant bodies in the UN family will accept it.

Children are the future of humankind, and every girl and boy should be wished for and be able to live in security.

Now, a few words about women and peace. It's a very interesting fact that current armed conflicts, mainly, have been made by men, while the vast

majority of victims are women and children. On the other hand, involving women in peace building has just begun. In my view, we need both men and women to build peace.

The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 that was accepted a little more than ten years ago, was a substantial victory. But the same thing that I was saying about the ICPD summit, or what could be said about the Beijing declaration, goes for resolution 1325 - it needs more implementation. A true change in practices is best realised through national programs. A twinning system can offer sisterly assistance to countries, which do not think they can succeed alone.

I'm now in Uppsala, and I'm not trying to flatter the Swedish society, but I have to mention a few names. Swedish women have made an excellent work in this sector, especially Margot Wallström. She has made excellent work as a UN Representative of resolutions 1820 and 1960, so it would be a good idea to bring her here to speak about this. In this context I always add that using rape or sexual violence in conflict more generally, as a method in warfare, should absolutely be banned and considered a war crime.

So, how do we achieve women's participation in peace negotiations? Well, of course through learning and training – in other words, if women receive the necessary training, they will have a better chance at participating in peace negotiations. But I would also like to add that women also contribute with additional information about the effects of the conflicts on the civil population, and they have knowledge on how to build trust between people.

It is also necessary to be better prepared for man-made and natural disasters. And I think it is very important to notice that modern, sophisticated societies are even more vulnerable to new risks, for example cyber-attacks, but also in other ways and sectors. Our society is very sensitive. And in this context I would like to mention another Swedish lady – Margaretha Wahlström who has done excellent work in how to create resilience in a society.

Dear audience, what I'm trying to explain to you, is that security policy has changed. War is a useless and cruel way to resolve disputes. And peace is not just absence of war. The modern term of security is much broader than earlier, and we also have to notice that the risk span, similarly, is much broader.

I am advised sometimes to tell stories, although I'm not a very good story teller. But I'll tell you one story. A long time ago, in the mid 90's, there were two foreign ministers who were women in the EU: Lena Hjelm-Wallén from Sweden and myself from Finland. Finland and Sweden had just joined the European Union. Being women we were quite odd birds in the European Foreign Policy arena.

At the time, the EU was trying to become a bigger figure in international politics and to become an active player in international crisis management. I believe that we, Sweden and Finland, brought new thinking to the security policy of the EU. I remember how vigorously we acted in order to include civil crisis management in the range of the Union's crisis management toolbox. Now that seems only natural, but at the time it was surprising. But I confess that it felt like we as newcomers succeeded perhaps

because of our “blue eyes”, since our colleagues did not necessarily understand the growing significance of civil crisis management in the modern world. Nevertheless, we were victorious anyway, and that’s the main thing.

It’s never easy to change the world, but we cannot expect change if we don’t try. I feel it is now time for a new world.

Students, I’m not going to tell you exactly how, but you should do what’s fair.

To me, Dag Hammarskjöld was a symbol of the UN, a great person and a symbol for Swedish international politics. Today you have many more excellent Swedish personalities in international politics. I have mentioned e.g. Jan Eliasson and others. Of course it’s important to have idols, but it is as important that the whole society respects the same values and wants to implement them in everyday life. And this is true with you in Sweden, and I hope you will keep this tradition. Thank you.

Tarja Halonen

Tarja Halonen served as the President of the Republic of Finland between 2000 and 2012. Prior to her presidency, President Halonen served as a member of parliament for 21 years. During her political career, President Halonen was appointed to several ministries and served as Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister of Justice and Minister of Social Affairs. Early in her career, President Halonen worked as a trade unionist and was a lawyer with the Central Organization of Finnish Trade Unions between 1970 and 1979.

President Halonen is known for her commitment to poverty eradication, sustainability and human rights. To these ends she has served in various capacities. She was the co-chair of ILO's World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, co-chair of the Panel of Eminent Persons of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and co-chair of the UN High-level Panel on Global Sustainability. Currently, she is co-chair of the High-Level Task Force for the International Conference on Population and Development. She holds a Master of Law from Helsinki University.

Dag Hammarskjöld

Dag Hammarskjöld (1905–1961) was a world citizen. During his period as Secretary-General of the United Nations, from 1953 until his death in 1961, he became known as an efficient and dedicated international civil servant.

Dag Hammarskjöld emphasized that a major task of the UN is to assert the interests of small countries in relation to the major powers. He also shaped the UN's mandate to establish peacekeeping forces. Before he was appointed UN Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld held high positions as a civil servant and became a non-partisan member of the Swedish Cabinet.

Dag Hammarskjöld also had strong cultural interests and was a member of the Swedish Academy. His book *Markings (Vägmärken)* was published after his death. Most of Dag Hammarskjöld's childhood and adolescence were spent in Uppsala where his father was the provincial governor, and where he is buried. He received the Nobel Peace Prize after his death.



Uppsala University

Uppsala University, founded in 1477, is the oldest and best-known university in Scandinavia. Famous scholars such as Olof Rudbeck, Anders Celsius and Carl Linnaeus were professors at the university. Eight Nobel Prize laureates have been professors at the university, among them Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, who was also the University's Pro-Chancellor. He received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1930.

In the same year Dag Hammarskjöld completed his studies at Uppsala with a bachelor's degree in Law. He began his studies in 1923, received a degree in Romance Languages, Philosophy and Economics in 1925 and took a further post-graduate degree in Economics early in 1928.

The University's international studies library is named after Dag Hammarskjöld and, in 1981, the Swedish Parliament established the Dag Hammarskjöld Chair of Peace and Conflict Research at Uppsala University [www.pcr.uu.se], to commemorate that twenty years passed since the death of Dag Hammarskjöld.

Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation

The Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation was established in 1962 by the Swedish government in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations as an autonomous foundation. Its mission is to catalyse dialogue and action for a socially and economically just, environmentally sustainable, democratic and peaceful world. In the spirit of Dag Hammarskjöld the Foundation aims to generate new perspectives and ideas on global development and multilateral cooperation. It builds bridges between actors and provide space for those most affected by inequalities and injustice. www.dhf.uu.se

Further information about the Dag Hammarskjöld Lectures including the full list of previous lecturers can be found at the website:

www.dhf.uu.se/dag-hammarskjold-lecture/

Other titles in this series:

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Mary Robinson, *Human Rights – Challenges for the 21st Century*, 1998



The medal which Uppsala University has produced in memory of Dag Hammarskjöld is awarded to the Dag Hammarskjöld Lecturers. It is designed by Annette Rydström and cast in bronze. The obverse shows a portrait of Dag Hammarskjöld and on the reverse a handshake and a text in Latin which reads: 'Uppsala University to its disciple in memory of his outstanding achievements.'

Photo: Jan Eve Olsson, Kungl. Myntkabinettet



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