



NATO REVIEW

magazine

where the experts come to talk

CHOOSE LANGUAGE

[PREVIOUS EDITIONS](#)

[VIDEOS](#)

[ABOUT NATO REVIEW](#)

[NEWSLETTER](#)

[Women in security: a work in progress?](#)

[Women on the frontline](#)

[Women's fight in pictures](#)

[Women in security: personal stories](#)

[View from the top](#)

[Women in security: climbing a very long ladder](#)

COMING UP NEXT IN
NATO REVIEW

[Partners - who needs them?](#)

ON THE MOVE?

OPTIMIZED FOR
Smartphone and PDA

NATO Review » Women: paying the price of conflict? » [View from the top](#)

Mrs. Lena Olving

View from the top

Ms. Lena Olving is Chief Operating Officer of Saab AB and serves as its Deputy Chief Executive Officer. She has been a director of numerous companies in Europe, India and Asia. She is also a chartered engineer.

How would you describe the progress of women's involvement in peace and security this century?

We see a change for the better. Today women are prime ministers, ministers of defence and so forth. They talk about these questions and consider them as important. At the same time women fly fighter jets, are defence reporters at newspapers and work within the defence industry. This we didn't see 50 years ago. But there is still work to be done.

One of the more important results of female progress in peace and security is that issues which were rarely addressed before are done so today. For example sexual violence. It has been a problem in most wars in history, but it is only during the last couple of years that the issue has been raised. I think this is a result of female involvement even though I know men care about it as much.

What obstacles have you experienced or witnessed for women in this area?

Lack of role models is one. It is changing but there is a need to show young women that this is an area that is not only important but also interesting to work in.

The belief that there are not enough competent women to recruit is another. That perception is just wrong. You will find a lot of talent if you look for it.

How do you feel the security area benefits from increased female participation?

Defence and security are cornerstones in countries all over the world. The reason for this is simply because children, women and men need protection from different threats. Unfortunately I think that security in its various forms will have to play an important part as long as we can foresee. It is necessary that those working with security know about people's way of life in order to understand their needs and requirements.

Greater female participation might mean for example that the security area will reflect society to a higher degree and be better able to gain society's respect and trust. I think that decisions will be more accurate and balanced. This is a consequence of being in a room where people have different backgrounds and different experiences.

With more respect and trust the level of understanding among people will grow on why different decisions are made. This would be a huge benefit for both defence and security.

NEW TO NATO REVIEW?

[READ MORE:](#)

women, women, peace and security, gender balance

“
quotes

Queen Elizabeth II

Whatever life throws at us, our individual responses will be all the stronger for working together and sharing the load

NEWSLETTER

MAKE SURE YOU DON'T MISS A THING

GO TO



NATO
MULTIMEDIA
LIBRARY

LIBGUIDES
Research tool

SHARE THIS



Facebook



Twitter



Delicious



Google Buzz



Digg It



Permalink



RSS



YouTube