

STILL BEHIND THE CURVE

GENDER BALANCE IN ARMS CONTROL,
NON-PROLIFERATION AND DISARMAMENT

AGENDA

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GENDER BALANCE**

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STILL BEHIND THE CURVE

11 NOVEMBER 2020

INTRODUCTION

In 2000, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 calling for the increased participation of women in peace and security.

This landmark resolution has been a driving force for inclusion as well as for research on the role of women in formal peace negotiations, in the military, in peacekeeping, in post-conflict governance bodies, etc.

While commitment to gender equality is rooted in rights and justice, this body of knowledge has provided additional arguments: diversity of perspectives can broaden the understanding of security, lead to careful examination of the issues and more sustainable policy outcomes.

2018 AGENDA FOR DISARMAMENT

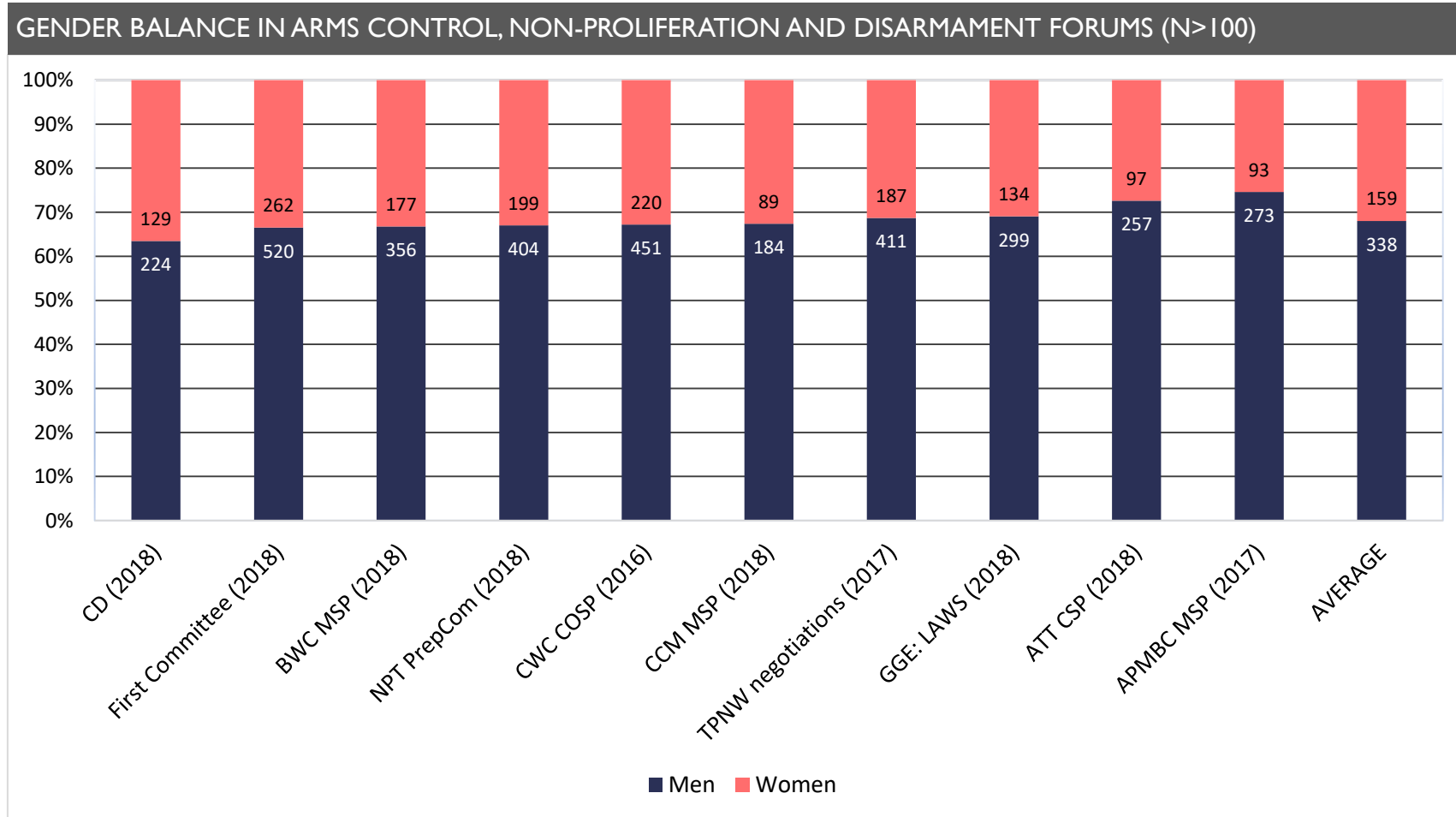
Empowering women and ensuring their equal and meaningful participation in disarmament and arms control decision-making processes can lead to more inclusive, effective and sustainable policy outcomes.

Actions 36 and 37 call for gender parity and for “the full and equal participation of women in all decision-making processes related to disarmament and international security”.

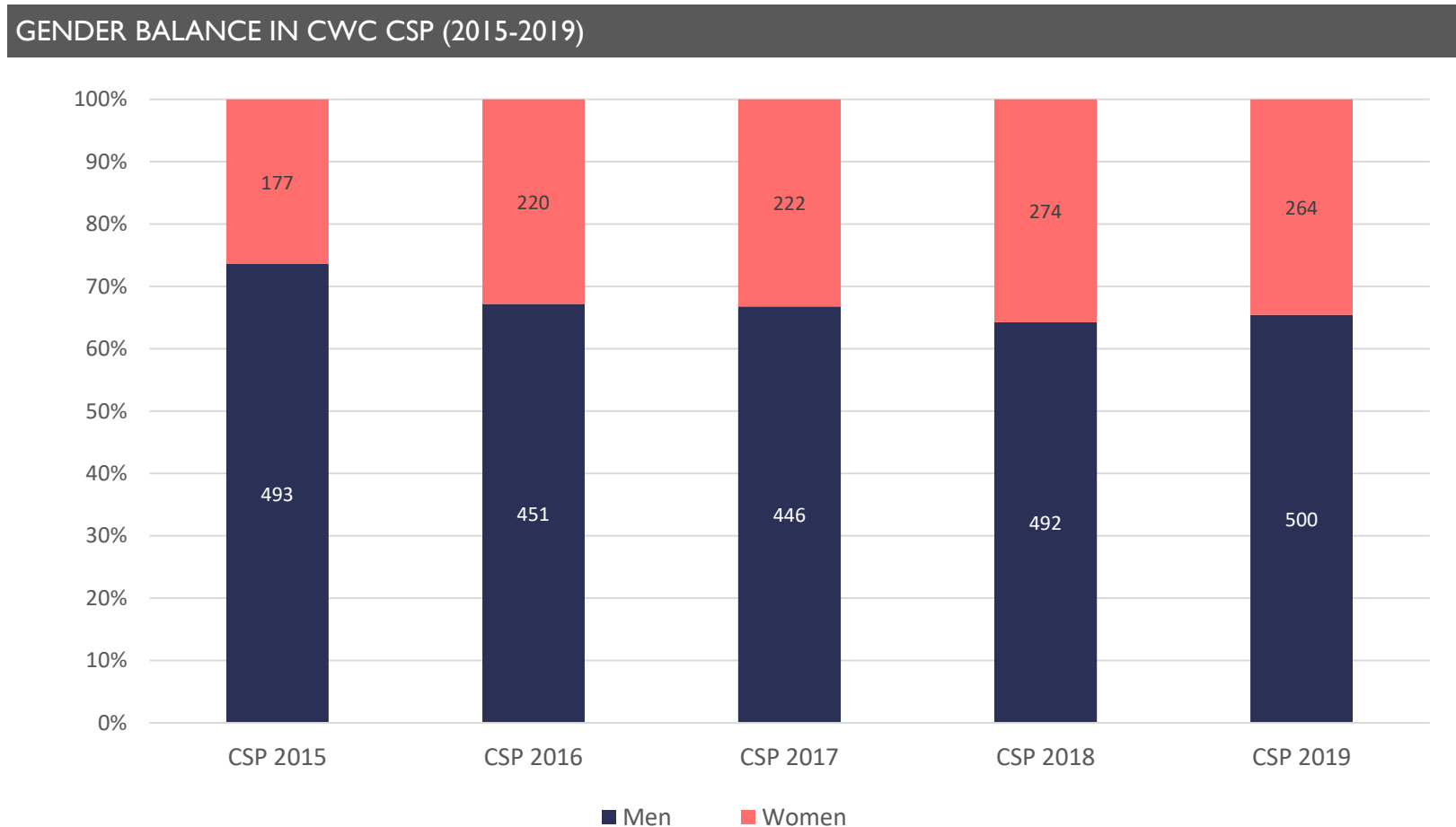


GENDER BALANCE IN ARMS CONTROL, NONPROLIFERATION & DISARMAMENT

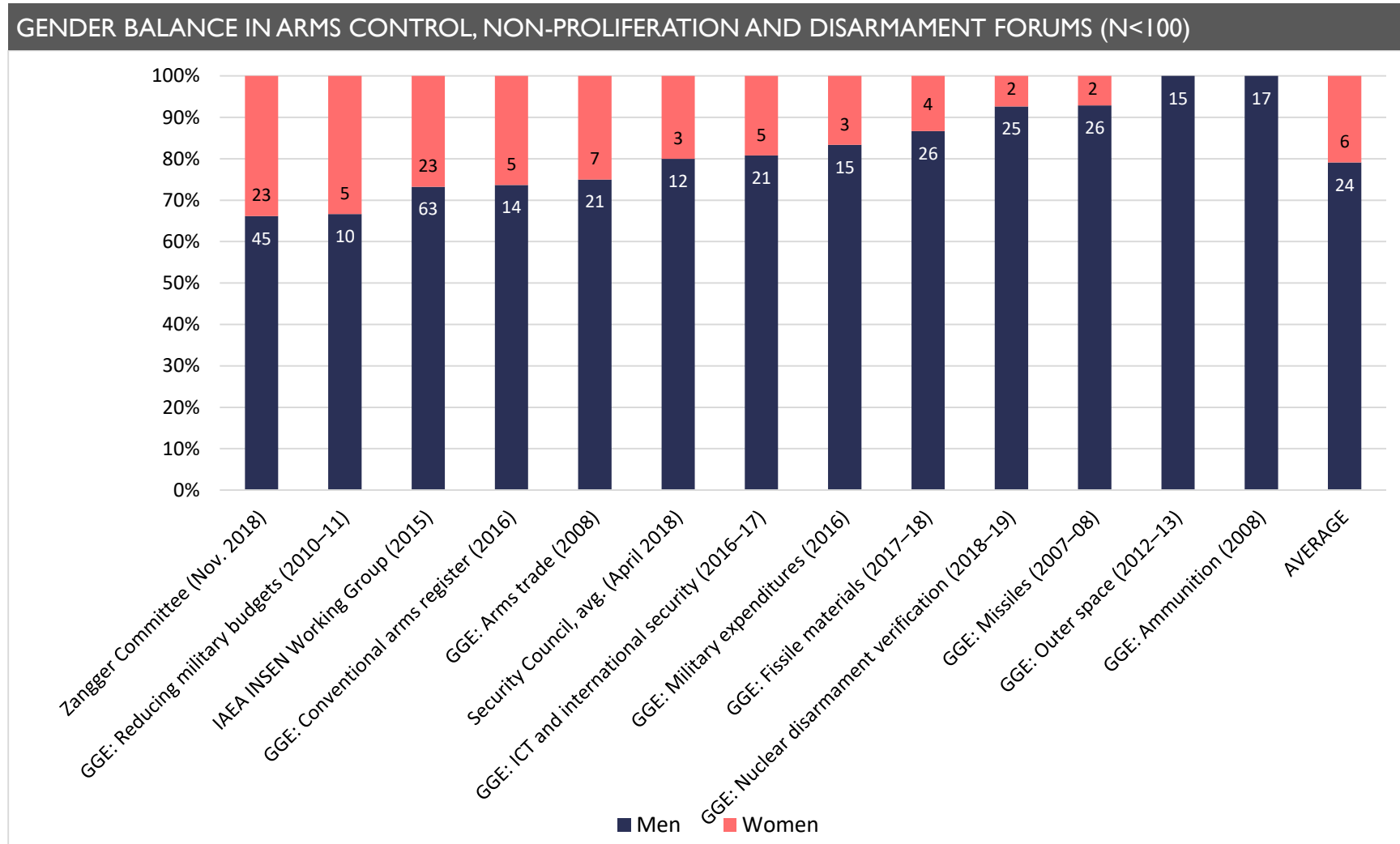
On average, women comprise only a third of diplomats in arms control and disarmament forums



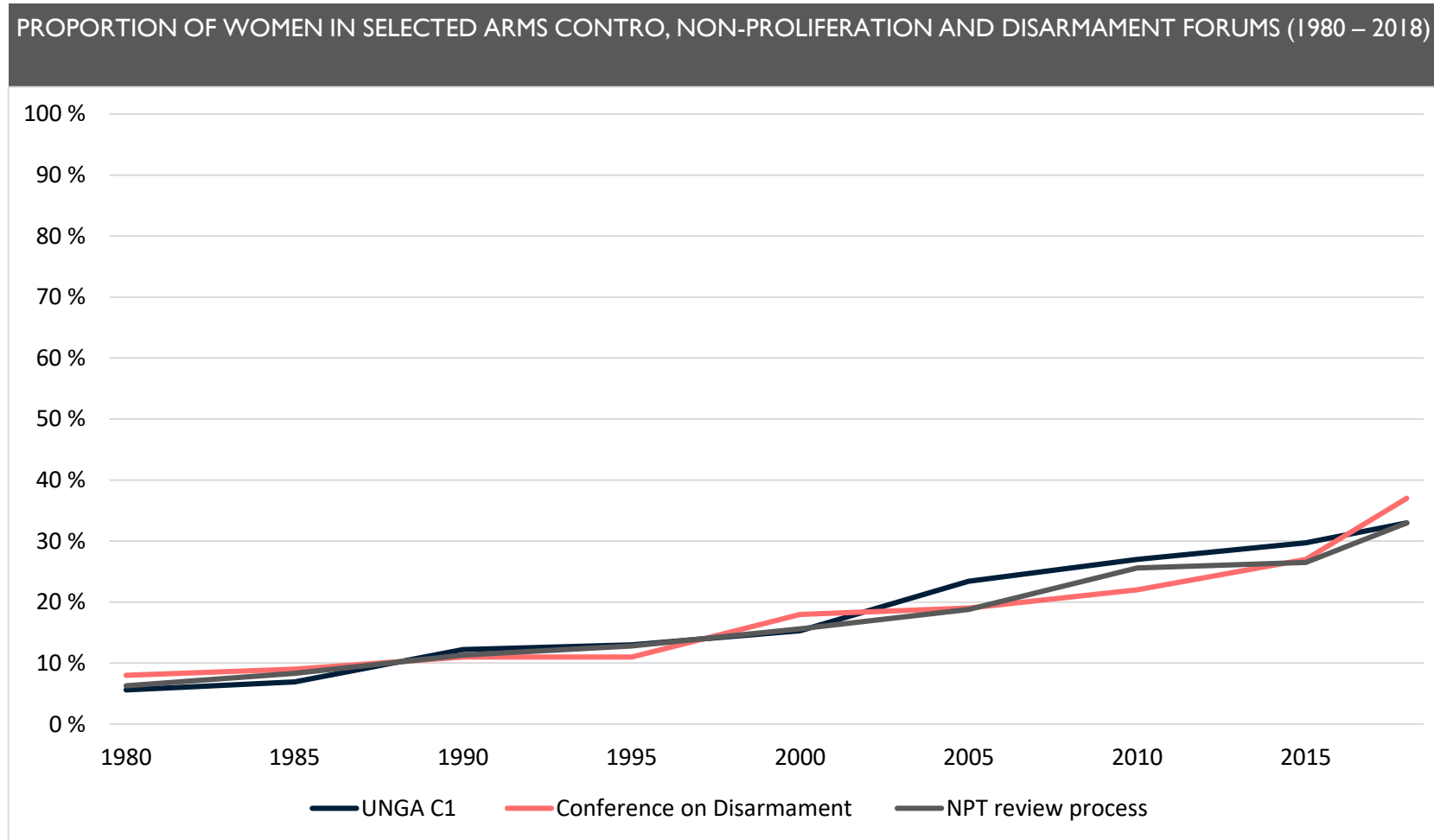
In CWC CSPs, men outnumber women 2 to 1



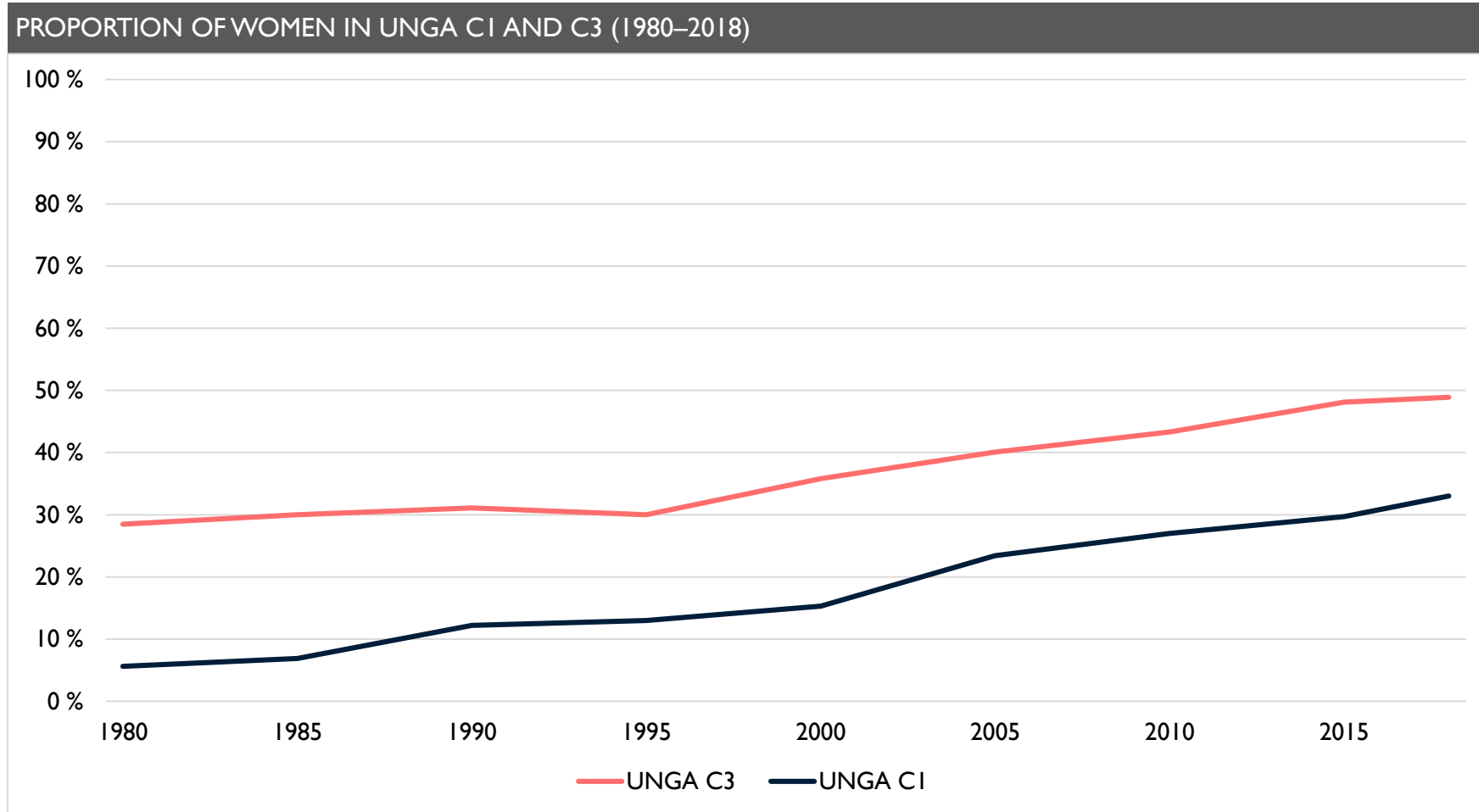
In smaller, more specialized forums, the average proportion of women drops to twenty percent



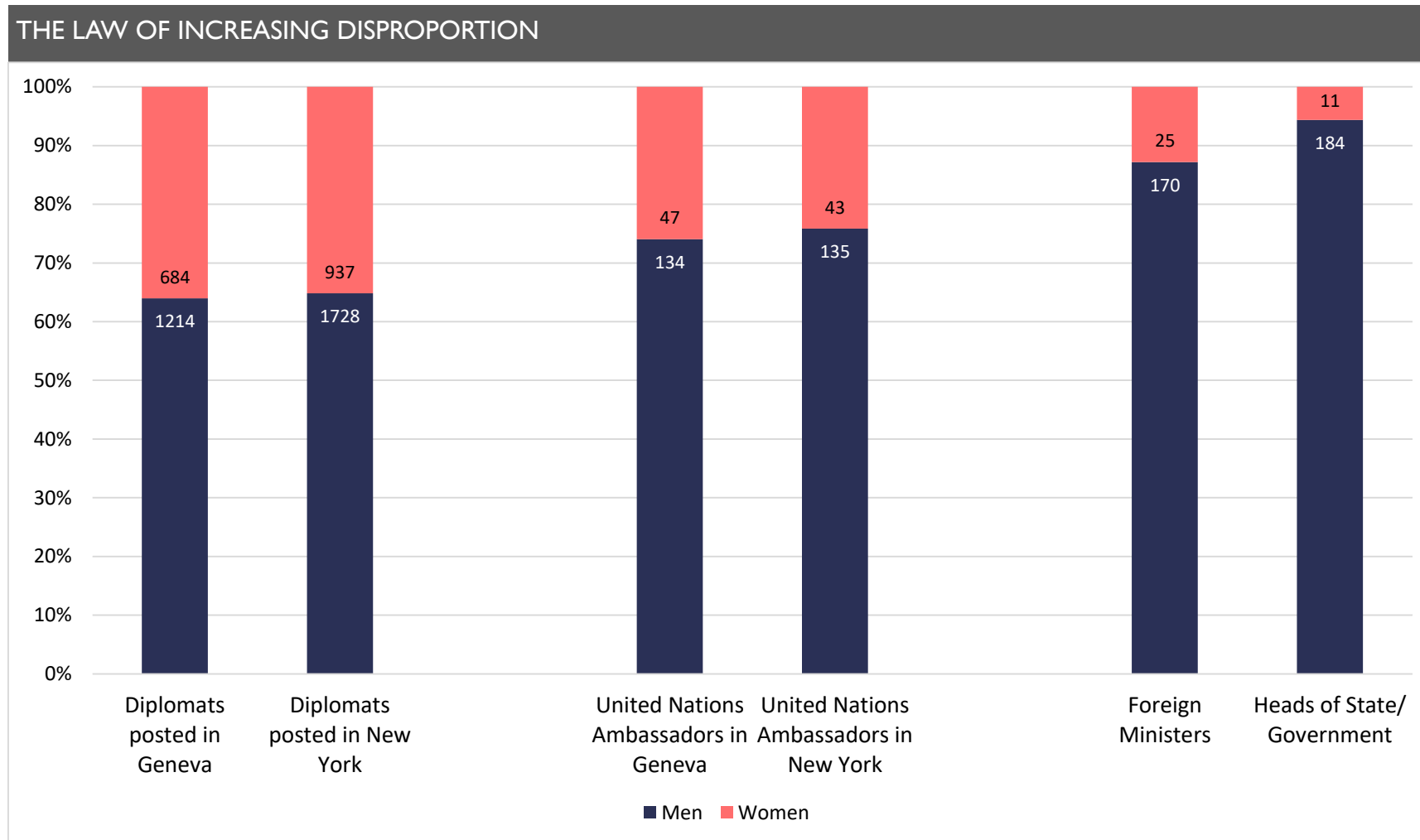
Historical trend of increasing participation of women



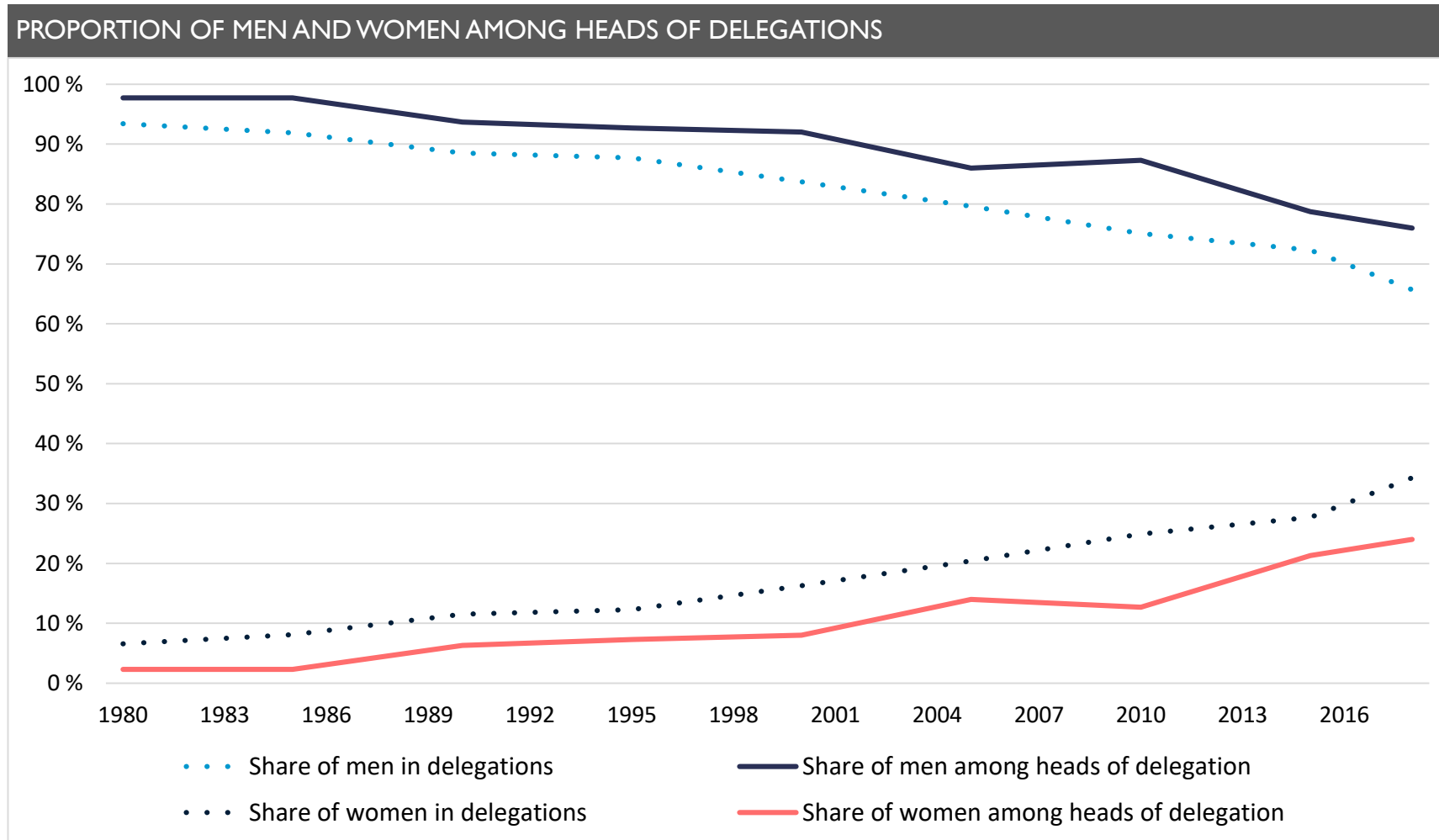
Women's underrepresentation in disarmament is not simply a consequence of their late start in diplomacy



The proportion of women declines as the importance of the position increases



The proportion of men as heads of delegation is always higher than the overall proportion of men delegates





VIEWS FROM DIPLOMATS

'SOFT' VS 'HARD' PORTFOLIOS

Noting that arms control and disarmament is considered as a 'hard' policy field, some diplomats argued that this area of work has tended to reward characteristics, expertise, and experience that are more commonly associated with men (e.g. toughness, seriousness, risk-taking, and military training).

Security and technological competences have been associated with masculinized norms, women's contribution in these areas has often been perceived as "non-technical".


GENDERED HIERARCHIES & DIVISIONS OF LABOR

An unequal division of family tasks can place a heavier burden on women and lead them to being held back in their career.

- Recruiters may choose not to hire married women and/or those who have children.
- Women may choose not to take up a lengthy assignment out of their country of residence due to family reasons.
- Colleagues may advise against a trip if a given country is considered to be a hostile place for women.

THE END GOAL OF GENDER EQUALITY IN DISARMAMENT FORA

Not all participants shared the UN's view of gender equality as a prerequisite to progress on every front. Some of them would like to see a stronger case for including women's voice in disarmament diplomacy.



CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS

- Clear trend of **increased participation of women** delegates in multilateral disarmament fora throughout the past four decades.
- Obstacles remain, as women are severely **underrepresented in leadership positions**.
- It appears that **women's role** in this field has not progressed at the same pace as their **nominal representation**.

WHAT CAN BE DONE? HOW CAN WE CLOSE THE GENDER GAP?

1. Conduct baseline assessments and set objectives and directives to improve gender balance in delegations.
2. Promote inclusive leadership.
3. Make gender considerations part of everyday work.
4. Adjust diplomatic practice to better accommodate family life.
5. Ensure women and men have equal opportunities in recruitment and promotion processes.

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6. Engage in initiatives e.g. OPCW's Women in Chemistry Symposium, Ada Lovelace Day events and online platforms such as DiversifyChemistry.com
7. When organizing panels, ensure that women and men are equally represented.
8. Ahead of CSPs, circulate relevant resources on gender to delegations, such as the Gender & Disarmament Resource Pack by the International Gender Champions Disarmament Impact Group.
9. During CSPs, the Secretariat could track participation of men and women as speakers and make the data available.

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