



BACKGROUND

TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325 (2000) ON WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325: A LANDMARK

United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on women and peace and security – unanimously adopted on 31 October 2000 – was a watershed in the evolution of international women’s rights and peace and security issues. It was the first Security Council resolution specifically to address the disproportionate and unique impact of war on women and stressed women’s contributions to conflict resolution and prevention, and to sustainable peace at all stages of peacebuilding, peacemaking and peacekeeping.

On 26 October 2010, the Security Council will review the decade of implementation of resolution 1325 in an open debate.

Through resolution 1325 – which is binding upon all UN Member States – the Security Council recognized that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, together with effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in peace processes, can contribute greatly to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.

The landmark resolution not only raised awareness of the unique and grave issues faced by women and girls in situations of armed conflict, but also provided those women with a legitimate basis to demand action from their governments and the international community.

Women’s role in peace and security is also now more clearly integrated in the Security Council’s deliberations, and it has further adopted resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) – which focus on sexual violence in conflict – and resolution 1889 (2009) which calls for concrete action to accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325.

Key provisions of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)

- Increased participation and representation of women at all levels of decision-making
- Attention to specific protection needs of women and girls in conflict
- Gender perspective in post-conflict processes
- Gender perspective in UN programming, reporting and in Security Council missions
- Gender perspective and training in UN peace support operations

Those responsible for implementation of resolution 1325 include:

- UN Security Council
- UN Member States
- UN Secretary-General and the UN system
- Parties to conflict

In some important ways, Security Council resolution 1325 has led to broad shifts in approach to women, peace and security issues.

UN peacekeeping, for instance, has changed dramatically as a result of resolution 1325. Women peacekeepers are now an integral part of peacekeeping missions, and gender issues are given due priority in all aspects of peacekeeping, from negotiations and decision-making, to security sector reform, mine action initiatives, and the enforcement of the rule of law.

The decade since the adoption of the resolution has also generated a flood of activities on the issue of women, peace and security by the Security Council, UN Member States, civil society and the UN System.¹

UN System activities include supporting women's electoral registration and women political candidates in Afghanistan, Burundi, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti, Liberia, Nepal, Iraq and Timor Leste; providing assistance for the establishment of government offices devoted to the promotion of women's rights in Kosovo; formation of the UN Action network to end sexual violence²; and supporting gender-sensitive constitutional reform processes in Afghanistan and Burundi.

Civil society organisations have also stepped up action over the last 10 years. One such example is the Women in Peacebuilding Network, which supported the groundbreaking participation of women in the Liberian peace process in 2003, and has since supported women's active involvement in the political and disarmament processes.

Among the various actions undertaken by Member States, a particularly important contribution has been the development of National Action Plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 – a key strategy for the attainment of national commitments in the area of women, peace and security.

However, while discrete activities have generated momentum, they have lacked coherence and systematic implementation and monitoring. Evidence of the impact of such efforts remains inadequate and significant achievements are difficult to quantify.

Overall, conditions faced by women and girls in situations of armed conflict remain cause for alarm.

One recent example of the severity of abuse of the human rights of women and girls in conflict was the rape of over 200 women and girls in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in July 2010. And while the Security Council has condemned acts of sexual violence, it has not applied firmer measures such as sanctions.

Speaking at a ministerial-level event on women, peace and security in September 2010, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said “we must lament our lack of progress,” adding that “the international community is still failing to protect the most vulnerable.”

Some key statistics highlight areas requiring urgent action:

- Women continue to be excluded or seriously under-represented in peace negotiations, peacebuilding and disarmament processes. Since 1992, women have represented, on average, just 7.1 percent of official delegations, and only 2.1 percent of signatories to peace agreements. To date, very few women have been formal mediators.³
- Women and girls continue to endure discrimination and gender-based violence – including systematic sexual assault – in the context of armed conflict. The deliberate use of widespread and systematic rape

¹REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY, S/2010/498.

²UN ACTION AGAINST SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN CONFLICT, WWW.STOPRAPENOW.ORG

³REVIEW OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION, REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL, E/2010/4.

as a tactic of war is a serious, present-day atrocity affecting millions of people, yet impunity persists for the perpetrators of these war crimes.

- The number of women civilian staff in peacekeeping operations has reached about 30 percent. But progress has been much slower in the uniformed components of UN peacekeeping operations: Despite notable additions including all-women formed police contingents, women make up less than 3 percent of uniformed peacekeepers and 8 percent of UN Police.⁴
- Out of 27 UN peace operations, special political missions and peacebuilding support offices, women head only five missions and are deputy heads of five missions. However, this represents a notable increase in female senior officials over previous years.⁵
- There is still a persistent shortfall in the financing of women's needs in post-conflict recovery plans.
- While the development of National Action Plans by Member States for the implementation resolution 1325 is on the increase, as of September 2010 only 19 countries had adopted such plans. Inadequate funding remains a serious challenge to the success of National Action Plans.

TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION

The tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 provides an opportunity for renewed and strengthened commitment and action on women, peace and security issues.

Measures identified as important for progress include:

- Increased human and financial resources for UN entities working on women, peace and security
- A framework setting UN system-wide priorities to ensure a single coherent and coordinated approach, with concrete and specific goals and targets for the next decade
- A strategy to increase women's participation and leadership in peace processes – in negotiation, post-conflict governance and reconstruction
- A meaningful set of indicators to track progress and help address the lack of accurate data
- The Security Council to receive, analyse and act upon information on women and conflict more systematically, and to consult regularly with women's organizations and survivors of abuses in situations of armed conflict
- The adoption of National Action Plans by Member States, backed by adequate funding
- Perpetrators of human rights violations against women and girls in conflict situations – including those who commission such abuses – to be brought to justice in accordance with national laws, international law and international humanitarian law

“Participation alone is not sufficient. Women must not just sit at the peace table, they must be heard. Not only should women serve in police forces and peacekeeping missions, they must influence decision-making.”

– SECRETARY-GENERAL BAN KI-MOON

⁴REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY, S/2010/498.

⁵FOR A FULL AND CURRENT LISTING OF HEADS OF MISSIONS, SEE: WWW.UN.ORG/EN/PEACEKEEPING/SITES/SRSG/TABLE.HTM