



**Statement by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on
Sexual Violence in Conflict Margot Wallström**

***THE 2011 NOBEL PEACE PRIZE LAUREATES AN INSPIRATION TO WOMEN ACROSS
THE GLOBE***

(7 October 2011)

I warmly congratulate the three laureates of the Nobel Peace Prize today. President of Liberia Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Liberian peace activist Leymah Gbowee, and Tawakkul Karman of Yemen are amazing women leaders, whose work continues to motivate us all. If only three of the world's women can achieve all they have, imagine what can be done if half of the world's population is allowed the rights women are entitled to.

It is now over ten years since UN Security Council resolution 1325 was adopted, which recognises that women and children constitute the majority of victims of armed conflicts, that women and girls are affected by conflict differently from men and boys, and that women have a role to play and a right to participate in all levels of a peace building process. But still today, less than ten percent of all peace agreements are negotiated by women and less than three percent are signed by women. Women's participation in peace processes needs to engage peacemakers, peacekeepers, peacebuilders and political leaders – not only women's rights and gender experts.

Allowing women access to the decision-making table remains a global challenge, and this is why today's announcement by the Norwegian Nobel Committee constitutes such an important encouragement not only to women in Africa and the Middle East. President Sirleaf's and Ms. Gbowee's efforts have greatly helped to make the historically invisible crime of conflict-related sexual violence visible. All three individuals are achievers in their own right, who embody what so many women have been working towards for so long. Let this prize therefore be an inspiration to women across the globe struggling for peace.

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