



Women's participation vital to peace processes, Security Council told

Security Council to discuss implementation of resolution 1325 on women, peace and security

(UNITED NATIONS NEW YORK, 26 October) In an Open Meeting of the Security Council tomorrow, Members will celebrate the fifth anniversary of the groundbreaking Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) which addressed the impact of war on women and called for increasing women's contribution to sustainable peace. They will discuss how to accelerate its implementation and women's equal participation in all peace processes.

Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) has served as a catalyst for women all over the world to mobilize in their efforts to achieve equal participation. At the Open Meeting, the Council will hear first-hand the experiences of women leaders who are advocating for an enhanced role for women in all peace processes and their full participation as equal partners in bringing peace and post conflict reconstruction to their own countries.

"Women at the grassroots level in countries as diverse as Afghanistan, Burundi, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq and Sudan have used this resolution to lobby for their voices to be heard in peacebuilding processes, in post-conflict elections, and in the rebuilding of their societies," said Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

"Since this resolution was adopted five years ago, a lot of progress has also been made within the UN system itself, in terms of understanding how to incorporate gender concerns into all aspects of peace and security. Department-specific action plans on gender mainstreaming are being prepared, gender-sensitive guidelines and new tools have been issued; staff is being trained. Still, significant gaps remain," she continued.

In his report to the Security Council on this issue, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan outlined an action plan for the United Nations system for implementation of the resolution, noting that this is "the first time that the United Nations system has embarked on a planning effort of such breadth and complexity, covering virtually all major areas of action in the field of women and peace and security".

Women from Afghanistan and Côte d'Ivoire will address the Security Council and share their experiences of using this UN resolution to stake their claim at the peace table and lobby for their equal participation in post-conflict political life. They will also highlight the challenges they continue to face.

Speakers in the Open Meeting will also include Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director of UNIFEM.



The report of the Secretary-General stresses, among other gaps, the need for enhancing women's participation in peace processes and for more systematic inclusion of gender perspectives in peace agreements. Including women in peace negotiations will increase the likelihood that agreements gain the full support of the community and ultimately of the whole nation and also ensure that there is no impunity for war criminals who commit crimes of rape and sexual abuse.

Continuing situations of violence against women are highlighted in the report which states, "more efforts are needed to protect women's rights, including to prevent, document and report on gender-based violence", suggesting that a comprehensive monitoring and compliance mechanism could be created.

Other measures included in the UN's time-bound action plan are additional training and "gender sensitization" for United Nations personnel, military and civilian police and more intensive efforts to build women's capacity to participate in peacemaking activities.

Women integral to the success of the Peacebuilding Commission

Key elements of the World Summit Outcome are of vital importance to millions of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict areas, according to the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council.

Women in conflict areas need to benefit from the principle of the responsibility to protect populations from genocide and the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission.

"Integrating a gender perspective in the design and work of the Peacebuilding Commission is a key element for the success of the Commission's work", said the Secretary-General in his report to the Security Council.

For a full list of events happening at UN Headquarters see:
www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/wps/calendar_of_events.pdf

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