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**Women Negotiating Peace – Experience, Obstacles, Opportunities**  
**International Conference: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)**  
**on Women, Peace and Security**  
**University of Iceland**  
**19-20 June 2009**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and an honour for me to have been invited by the Government of Iceland to participate in this important conference. I wish to pay special tribute to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the University of Iceland for organizing this conference. I commend them on the excellent arrangements and hospitality.

We meet today on the eve of the ninth anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000). While arrangements are underway for the commemoration of the ninth anniversary, attention is already directed to the tenth anniversary by all stakeholders. It is, therefore, not surprising that this conference has planned to hold a workshop on that issue as well.

Madam Chairperson,

It is timely to pursue and take stock of the status of implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Where do we stand with the implementation?

It should be recalled that in October 2000, when the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 (2000), binding on all 192 Member States, the Council fundamentally changed the image of women in conflict situations from that of exclusively victims of war to that of active participants as peacemakers, peace-builders and negotiators. The Council stressed the importance of women's equal participation with men and their full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. It highlighted the need to increase their role in decision-making, conflict prevention and resolution, and urged Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions, as well as in mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict.

The resolution has been translated by the NGO Working Group on Peace and Security into more than 60 languages and has been broadly distributed. Consequently, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) is increasingly evoked to claim the women's role in all the peace processes. A great deal has been accomplished in many of the broad areas set out in the resolution.

The Security Council

The Security Council remains seized with the issues of women, peace and security. It has held open thematic debates annually in the context of the commemoration of resolution 1325 (2000). In conjunction with the open debate, the Security Council has organized meetings with women's NGOs through the Arria Formula mechanism and has invited a couple of them to address the Council during the open thematic debate. Moreover, the Council has included a gender perspective in its requests for specific country reports. During its visits to countries, the Council increasingly meets with women to obtain a first hand understanding of the impact of conflict on the affected women. Concerned over the escalation of rape and sexual violence in conflict situations, last year the Council adopted resolution 1820 (2008) specifically focusing on rape and sexual violence in situations before the Council. Resolution 1820(2008) is complementary to resolution 1325 (2000).

Other intergovernmental bodies, the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the Commission on the Status of Women have also addressed issues of relevance to women, peace and security and adopted policy guidelines which further the implementation of the resolution.

### Member States

A lot has been done and achieved by Member States in translating policy frameworks into concrete actions. To date, 13 Member States have adopted National Action Plans for the implementation of SCR 1325 (2000). At the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security 2009, held in Liberia in March 2009, an idea of "twining" was floated and received enthusiastic response. Through this approach, a country which is ready to adopt a national action plan would pair with one which already did and mutually support each other with implementation of the resolution.

Member States have also taken measures to increase the number of women in governments, parliaments, the judiciary, the military and police. These efforts are showing results in the increased number of women in the police and military components of UN peace missions.

### UN System

Following the request by the Security Council, UN entities prepared a system-wide action plan for 2005-2006 in order to pursue a holistic and coherent approach to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The plan, which covered all the areas of the resolution, was reviewed and updated for the period 2008-2009. The review indicated that UN entities were undertaking about 500 activities for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The second plan addressed a number of deficiencies from which the first plan had suffered. Among those was the lack of performance indicators, monitoring and accountability mechanisms. The review of performance under this plan will be conducted in 2010.

The United Nations has made major strides to maintain a gender perspective in all areas related to peace and security and in post-conflict development. Resource materials, tools and guidelines have been developed by different entities of the UN system. These are proving to be very useful in the incorporation of a gender perspective in peacekeeping, peace-building, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) and post-conflict reconstruction. More importantly, through the process of designing these policies and guidelines, enhanced commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment has been obtained. Greater awareness of the centrality of gender mainstreaming has been heightened.

### What can the United Nations do better?

#### Awareness raising

While acknowledging the enormous work which has gone into making the resolution known worldwide, it is disappointing to note that in many countries the resolution remains a mystery. At two High-level Dialogues, for Latin America and the Caribbean region and for African region, which were co-organized by my office, the office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) together with the Regional Commissions for Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa, some key government officials indicated that they had not been aware of the resolution. When senior officials in such critical ministries as defence and justice are unaware of the resolution, the level of its implementation is bound to be minimal. Acknowledging that this is a major setback, OSAGI, with the sponsorship of the government of Norway, has worked with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) to produce an on-line self-training course on the resolution. It is hoped that the entire civil service would be covered through this medium.

#### Gender Mainstreaming

The incorporation of a gender perspective remains disjointed and haphazard. Quite often it is still an add-on or seems to be an imposition. In many cases, those responsible for gender mainstreaming lack capacity to do so. The United Nations system adopted in 2006 a UN policy on gender mainstreaming to which all Executive Heads are committed. A strategy has been agreed upon for the system as a whole to follow. Training was one of the elements which the system agreed to pursue together. With the assistance of the UN System Staff College, a mandatory training module is being developed for use by all the UN entities. This would introduce consistency and coherence within training and seek to harmonize approaches. Much more remains to be done to eliminate fragmentation and maximise resources.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) have deployed Gender Advisers to peace missions. In some cases, they have formed Gender Units. These advisers have been instrumental in ensuring that gender perspectives are incorporated in the work of the missions. Yet many of them do this work in addition to other responsibilities making it difficult to focus

completely on gender mainstreaming. Even where they may be fully dedicated they may not always have the resources necessary to make a meaningful impact. This is an area which requires reinforcement. The United Nations' efforts should be directed towards strengthening high-level commitment to ensure positive change. Support of all stakeholders must be harnessed in this effort.

### Protection of women and girls

Resolution 1325 (2000) acknowledged with concern that civilians, particularly women and children, accounted for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflicts. The Council noted the deliberate targeting of women and girls by combatants and armed groups. Regrettably, the situation has not improved in the nine years since the adoption of the resolution. On the contrary, the heightened level of violence against women and girls, in particular rape and sexual violence led the Council to pass resolution 1820 (2008) focusing on rape and sexual violence in conflict situations. The United Nations has come under criticism for its inadequate response to protect women and girls from sexual violence. However, the Secretary-General of the United Nations took a bold and welcome step to address violence against women and girls when he launched his campaign – Unite to End Violence against Women – in 2008. It is expected that the campaign will lead, among others, to systematic attention to, and condemnation of sexual violence as a tactic of war. The campaign also hopes to end impunity for those who commit acts of violence against women and girls. United Nations entities must increase their support for and cooperation with this campaign, as its objectives reflect the core goals of resolution 1325. Whether the level of violence being committed against women and girls stems from a total break down of law and order, weak legal and judicial institutions, cultural norms, a concerted effort is required by all stakeholders, including the United Nations, to end this scourge.

The United Nations' role had always been one of keeping peace. However, when there is no peace to keep, that role must necessarily be modified. That transformation must be expedited. The United Nations must be provided with the means to achieve the transformation. Member States will have to move together with the Secretariat out of the "box". An example of a paradigm shift was provided by India when it deployed an all female police contingent in Liberia. The impact has been positive and profound. Today the Liberian Police is receiving a much higher number of women applicants ready to become policewomen.

### Recommendations

In conclusion, I would like to leave you with the following thoughts:

- This Conference may consider championing an intensified global awareness-raising campaign to ensure that resolution 1325 (2000) is widely publicised before the tenth anniversary. The conference could come up with ideas on how this could be done.

- The government of Iceland could invite UNITAR in collaboration with the University of Iceland to organize a seminar series between now and October 2010 on women, peace and security – how resolution 1325 (2000) has transformed the role of women.
- The government of Iceland may champion the engagement of men in the implementation of the resolution at every level, as addressing the issues of women in the peace process requires the participation of men in order to ensure sustainable peace.
- All stakeholders should address issues of masculinity and the reluctance of men to share space with women at the negotiating table as equal partners.
- The Government of Iceland should urge the Council to consider favourably the proposal for a Security Council mechanism for holding Member States accountable for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).
- The prevention of conflict must be accorded higher priority in peace making, peace building, peace consolidation and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction by increased investment in environmental scanning to ensure the early identification of threats to peace and security and the implementation of protective mechanisms for girls and women.

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