

**“Affirmative Action and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)  
CEDAW General Recommendation 25 and  
women's participation in conflict prevention and conflict resolution”.**

**Monday 5 April 2004, Palais des Nations, Geneva  
(Room XIX), 13:15 to 15:00**

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Chairperson  
Distinguished participants

It is a pleasure and honour to participate in this important panel. I bring you the best wishes of Ms. Angela King, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Women and Gender Issues, who is also the Chairperson of the Inter-agency Taskforce on Women, Peace and Security - a key player in the United Nations efforts to enhance women's participation and bring greater attention to gender perspectives in the peace, security and humanitarian work of the United Nations.

I wish to begin by acknowledging the support of the German Government to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325, which is illustrated by the support to this panel.

In my statement I will focus on the mandates for increasing the involvement of women in peace and security work of the United Nations and provide some examples of efforts undertaken to date. Finally, I will highlight some of the remaining gaps and challenges, as well as the need to fully utilize CEDAW General Recommendation 25 to increase affirmative action in support of the goals on women, peace and security.

In his address to the Security Council in October 2002, Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated: "if women suffer the impact of conflict disproportionately, they are also the key to the solution of conflict". Sustainable peace and lasting security cannot be achieved without women's empowerment and full involvement. There has been a radical change in discussions on women and peace and security, with a shift from viewing women as primarily or solely as victims to understanding the diverse roles women play in conflict and post-conflict situations. Many women organize locally and regionally for conflict resolution and peacemaking as well as disarmament activities. At grassroots level women' groups and networks have provided examples of the types of innovative and flexible strategies required for effective conflict prevention and resolution. Here I would like to pay a special tribute to the Mano River Women's Peace Network, represented on this panel by Ms Nana Pratt, which recently won the prestigious United Nations Prize in the Field of Human Rights for 2003.

Although women in many conflict prone areas have been actively involved in informal peace processes, they are unfortunately still usually left out when formal peace negotiations begin and cannot make their voices heard. Women's participation is not systematic or assured and there is a need for affirmative action in this area.

Security Council resolution 1325 has a strong focus on increasing the participation of women in activities on peace and security. Four of the 18 operative paragraphs call for an increase in the involvement of women.

Paragraph One: *Urges* Member States to ensure **increased representation of women at all decision-making levels** in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

Paragraph Two: *Encourages* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an **increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels** in conflict resolution and peace processes;

Paragraph Three: *Urges* the Secretary-General to **appoint more women as special representatives** and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard *calls on* Member States **to provide candidates** to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;

Paragraph Four: *Further urges* the Secretary-General to seek **to expand the role and contribution of women** in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among **military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel**;

In compliance with Security Council resolution 1325, a study on women, peace and security was carried out by the Secretary-General in 2002. A report, based on the findings of the study was presented to the Security Council and discussed in an open meeting of the Council in October 2002. Recommendations for action submitted to the attention of the Security Council added some new elements to the mandates already established:

- requesting briefings on the situation of women and girls, involving gender specialists and ensuring consultation with women's groups and networks, during missions and visits by the Security Council;
- ensuring the full involvement of women in negotiations of peace agreements, including through provision of training for women organizations on formal peace processes;
- increasing the participation of women in initial stages of programming and service delivery in humanitarian crises; and
- ensuring in efforts to secure local ownership for reconstruction that women groups and networks are involved, particularly at decision-making levels.

The Statement by the President of the Security Council on 31 October 2002 reiterated the support of the Council for the full implementation of resolution 1325. It also:

- expressed concern at the slow progress in the appointment of women as special representatives and envoys of the Secretary-General and urged an increase in the number of women serving as high-level representatives;
- urged Member States to continue to provide candidates to the Secretary-General for inclusion in a database;
- noted that the appointment of gender advisers at sufficiently senior levels at Headquarters was necessary and that progress in gender mainstreaming at mission level was linked to the establishment of gender units and gender advisers;
- recognized the vital role of women in promoting peace, particularly in preserving social order and educating for peace;
- encouraged Member States and the Secretary-General to establish regular contacts with local women's groups and networks in order to utilize their knowledge of both the impact of armed conflict on women and girls; and to ensure that those groups are actively involved in reconstruction processes, particularly at decision-making levels.

I would now like to address briefly some of the efforts and achievement made. Since 2000, the Security Council has held several special debates on women, peace and security and has increased the focus on gender issues in other debates. It has consulted with women's groups and networks in the field and at headquarters (including through Arria Formula meetings). Security Council missions met with women's groups during missions to Kosovo, Sierre Leone, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Great Lakes and Afghanistan. The reports of the missions referred to these meetings, particularly the report from Afghanistan, and made a number of key recommendations supporting the advancement of women. The Security Council sought advice from the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women on Sierre Leone. The appointment of gender advisers has also been supported in key missions.

Other positive advances have been made in the attention to gender perspectives and women's participation in the work of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security. An informal group of approximately 25 Member States from all regional groups ("The Friends of 1325") has been active in advocating for an increase in women's participation and for gender mainstreaming. They have organized meetings with members of the Security Council, with departments in the United Nations Secretariat and hosted roundtables to bring greater attention to these issues.

Considerable efforts have also been made by relevant parts of the United Nations system, at different levels to implement Security Council resolution. This has included a focus on achieving gender balance in peace-building, demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration processes, peacekeeping operations, humanitarian activities and reconstruction and rehabilitation programmes. The Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA) has produced a Gender Action Plan which spells out what each section in the department should do to support the participation of women and incorporation of gender perspectives. DDA is also increasing efforts to ensure women's representation on panels, in expert groups and in the UN Fellowship programme on disarmament. It is establishing a roster of female disarmament experts.

The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is in the process of developing an action plan and will appoint a gender adviser to support its implementation.

The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) has appointed a Gender Adviser (P4-level) at Headquarters; training programmes have been developed for both uniformed personnel and civilian staff; gender issues have been given attention in new peacekeeping operations, such as Cote d'Ivoire, Sudan, Burundi, Haiti and Cyprus; gender specialists were included in the assessment missions to Cote d'Ivoire, Burundi and Haiti; gender advisers have been appointed in seven multi-disciplinary peacekeeping missions (Afghanistan, Cote d'Ivoire, DRC, Kosovo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Timor-Leste) and discussions are underway on the possibility of appointing gender advisers in the newly formed missions in Cyprus, Burundi and Haiti.

The Department of Political Affairs, has developed an action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325. It also collaborated with the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women in the expert group meetings on *"Peace agreements as a means for promoting gender equality and ensuring participation of women – A framework of model provisions"*, in 2003 and *"Enhancing women's participation in electoral processes in post-conflict countries"* in 2004, as preparation for the Commission on the Status of Women's consideration of the theme women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building".

A number of United Nations entities have supported women's informal peace activities and provided training for women's organizations on conflict prevention and resolution, including on formal peace negotiations. For example, the Division for the Advancement of Women held three training programmes to support capacity building for women leaders in the Mano River and Great Lakes regions in Africa.

Efforts have been made to increase the participation of women in disarmament, demobilization and resettlement programmes (both ex-combatants and camp followers) and in reconstruction efforts. Peacekeeping missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo and East Timor worked to promote gender balance in local police forces and trained new or restructured police forces on combating domestic violence and trafficking in women. In Timor Leste, the United Nations Transitional Administration worked with women's groups and networks to ensure incorporation of gender dimensions into elections, the constitution, legislation and recruitment policies for the civil service. A national machinery for the advancement of women was established in the Office of the Prime Minister. Another positive outcome was 27 percent women in the country's first Parliament, higher than most other countries than Scandinavia. This has now been surpassed by the extraordinary recent election of 48.8 percent women in the Parliament in Rwanda.

Further examples of efforts made can be found in the Secretary-General's Study on Women, Peace and Security. However, while it is clear that progress has been made, these are all areas where more systematic efforts, and regular monitoring and reporting of progress, is required. For example, many reconstruction activities are still not sufficiently gender-sensitive and do not provide equitable opportunities for women. Women in refugee and other camps continue to be vulnerable to the negative effects of insufficient security and failure to take their specific needs into account and involve them in camp management.

Particular mention should be made of the work of the Taskforce on Women, Peace and Security, under the Inter-agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, on advocacy on follow-up and implementation of Security Council resolution 1325. The Taskforce members include 20 United Nations agencies and 5 non-governmental organizations. The taskforce aims to develop new approaches to support implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 and monitor and report on progress. Since 2000, the Taskforce has carried out a wide range of diverse activities, which include:

- analysis of attention to gender perspectives (including on the participation of women) in Secretary-General's reports to the Security Council;
- development of briefing kits for SRSGs and for Security Council missions to support consultation with women, for example to West Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the Great Lakes, and Afghanistan;
- preparation of checklists for assessment missions to support consultation for women, for example to Iraq, Liberia, Cote d'Ivoire and Sudan.;
- promotion of participation of gender specialists in Integrated Mission Taskforces (IMTFs) and UNDG Coordination Groups, such as in Iraq, Sudan, Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire;
- preparation of a database on local women's networks and NGOs which includes the names and contacts of women's groups and networks which can be consulted during missions and visits; and
- development of a database of gender experts who can be called upon to provide technical assistance in needs assessments and other processes.

In terms of measuring the participation of women, available data highlights some progress made but also illustrates that much more needs to be done. Very limited progress has been made in relation to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) and Deputy-Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (DRSGs). Only 3.7 percent of SRSGs, and 6.6 percent of DRSGs, are women. There is one female SRSG (UNOMIG in Georgia) among the 27 field-based heads of peacekeeping or political and peace building missions. There are currently two Deputy SRSGs – one in Georgia and one in MONUC – DRC of 15 posts. (One will leave her post at the end of this month.) There is one woman deputy chief of mission in Guatemala.

Data on gender balance in peace-keeping missions reveals that there is also considerable room for improvement. As of 5 February 2004, 1,050 of the more than 3600 (29 per cent) international civilian staff working in peacekeeping or peace building field-based mission are women. Of the larger multi-dimensional peace keeping missions,

UNMIK – Kosovo has the highest percentage of women at 34.4%, as compared to MONUC – DRC at 33.6% and UNMEE – Eritrea/Ethiopia at 31.2%. Of the smaller missions, BONUCA in the Central African Republic has 47.6% women and MINUGA in Guatemala has 41.7% women.

As of March 2004, of the total of 4,653 civilian police contributed by 65 countries only 188 (4.04 per cent) were women. This should be compared with the figures for 2003 (May), when there were 211 women police (4.08%) of 5,175 total police in peacekeeping operations. 50 per cent of contributing countries (36) provide female police to peacekeeping missions. The top five female police contributing countries - Germany, United States, Ghana, Zambia and Zimbabwe - provide 44.6% of all women police officers.

In conclusion, while significant progress has been made over the past four years, there are many persistent gaps and challenges in the area of peace and security which need to be urgently addressed. The use of special measures will be required to ensure the achievement of goals at an acceptable pace.

It is important to keep in mind that the representation of women in different bodies and processes does not necessarily ensure their effective participation. Special efforts are sometimes needed to ensure that women can make an impact, including in terms of changing the norms and rules and procedures which inhibit their effective contributions and hinder attention to important gender equality issues.

A number of constraints to the effective participation of women have to be addressed. These include their poor representation at the decision-making levels where they could make the most impact; the persistence of violence against women which hinders many women from reaching their full potential; lack of access to resources, including finances and information; and persistent stereotypes on the roles and expected behaviour of women, including in government institutions and society in general.

General Recommendation 25 provides guidance on the adoption of "temporary special measures" as a means of addressing the under-representation of women in all areas of the work of the United Nations, including on peace and security. The challenge will be to find the ways to use it effectively to accelerate the pace of implementation.

In closing, I would like to remind us all that the presence of women in peace processes or other activities is not in itself a guarantee that gender equality issues will be placed on the peace and security agenda. All actors in peace and security activities - male or female - must have the awareness and capacity to bring attention to the concerns of both women and men. Efforts to increase the representation and participation of women must be complemented with gender mainstreaming.

Thank you.