

**“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

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:

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,

