



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The Security Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, 31 October 2000.

For the text of the resolution, visit: <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/1325.html>

For the printer-friendly version of this newsletter and for past issues, visit:
<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/1325News/1325ENewsindex.html>

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*PeaceWomen is a project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom <http://www.wilpf.int.ch>
Please visit us at: <http://www.peacewomen.org>*

1. EDITORIAL

The PeaceWomen Team

One theme of this year's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels. PeaceWomen joined with thousands of women activists to challenge governments to put such policy discussions into practice and create real possibilities for our participation.

This E-News is filled with examples of women participating and advocating for more avenues for women's participation, such as the Women in Black initiative in Belgrade for a national resolution mandating implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325. We highlight only a few of the International Women's Day actions around the world, and the courageous women who were on the streets demanding respect for their human rights in the face of violent repression such as in Iran.

These examples highlight the importance of our participation, in whatever form we can muster. Our actions achieve concrete results and take us closer to our goal of equality, but they also inspire and motivate women, young and old, around the globe. Our efforts contribute to creating an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, an aspect of the second theme of this year's CSW.

WILPF took the opportunity of International Women's Day to call upon the Secretary General to put action behind his words as well; see the letter PeaceWomen helped draft calling for the UN to lead the way in creating equality in its leadership. Perhaps we will be pleasantly surprised and see a woman Secretary General, as Kofi Anan has encouraged.

We are motivated and inspired by the efforts of women's organizations to encourage women's participation while protecting them from the often resulting danger, such as UNIFEM'S new initiative in Afghanistan. We applaud the courage of Sudanese women to use international avenues such as the International Criminal Court to demand accountability for violent crimes they suffer. Women are demanding an end to sexual violence, exploitation and abuse and our efforts are bearing fruit, as you will read in our report on the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and the Security Council open meeting on this issue.

We hope you will use and share the resources highlighted in this month's E-News. By highlighting our collective experience to advance women's needs and rights in relation to peace and security, we are all strengthened.

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As always we welcome your contributions to the newsletter's content. The newsletter will be sent out towards the end of each month and we will feature the deadline for submissions for the next edition in each newsletter. Contributions for the April edition should be sent to enewssubmissions@peacewomen.org by **Thursday 20 April 2006**.

2. WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY NEWS

SECURITY COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

March 8, 2006 - (United Nations) -The following statement to the press was delivered by Security Council President César Mayoral (Argentina): On the International Day of Women, the members of the Security Council reaffirm their commitment to the continuing and full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). They recognize the significant progress that has been made in its implementation and express their willingness to continue working in order to overcome remaining obstacles that restrict its full implementation.
<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/March06/SCPR.html>

UK MINISTERS AGREE A UK NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

March 8, 2006 -(FCO News) UK Ministers announced on 8 March - International Women's Day - an action plan to address the disproportionate effects of conflict on women and girls. The cross-government action plan sets out how the UK will implement UN Security Resolution 1325.
http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/March06/UK_1325.html

NORWAY - WOMEN CONTRIBUTE TO CONFLICT RESOLUTION

March 8, 2006 -(Aftenposten) Women, peace and security. All statistics and experience show the same results; women are the ones that suffer most from poverty. And if women are not in majority among troops, they will be the ones to suffer the most in the wake of a conflict.
<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/March06/norwaygolnatrans.html>

GIVE THE U.N.'S REINS TO A WOMAN

March 15, 2006 -(Washington Post) The United Nations is lagging. The premier world organization is still missing the point that many have grasped in countries such as Germany, Jamaica, Liberia, Chile and New Zealand: that women, too, can serve as leaders at the highest level. In the 60 years since the United Nations was founded, no woman has served as secretary general. And despite the body's stated goal of achieving gender parity within the system by the year 2000, women remain grossly underrepresented. The numbers are embarrassing: Only 16 percent of undersecretaries general are women.
<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/March06/UNreinstowoman.html>

WOMEN MUST GET INVOLVED IN PREVENTION AND RESOLUTION OF CONFLICTS

Feb 23 2006- (European Parliament) Women must participate on equal terms with men in the prevention and resolution of conflicts as well as in peace-building, said MEPs and invited experts at a hearing held on Monday by the European Parliament's committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality. Various speakers called for women to be included in peace negotiations and drew attention to the differing effects of armed conflicts on women and men.
http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/Febo6/Europe_women.html

PROTESTS FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS MARK INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY ACROSS ASIA

March 13, 2006 -(Ms. Magazine) A series of protests and rallies for women's rights occurred in several Asian countries in the days leading up to International Women's Day, March 8. Nearly 2,000 women and men protested acid attacks, of which women are the primary target, in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on March 7, according to

the Associated Press (AP). Monira Rahman, spokesperson for the Acid Survivor's Foundation, told the AP that women made up 75 percent of the 268 victims of such attacks last year.

<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/March06/womensdayasia.html>

UN'S TOP ENVOY TO KOSOVO URGES HIGHER PROFILE FOR WOMEN IN POLITICAL LIFE

March 2, 2006 -(UN News) The senior United Nations envoy to Kosovo today urged a higher profile for women in the political life of the UN-administered province.

http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Kosovo/UN_Higher_Profile.html

ABSENCE OF WOMEN FROM LEADERSHIP POSITIONS UNDERMINES DEMOCRACY

February 28, 2006-(UN Press Release) Evy Messell, Director, Bureau for Gender Equality, International Labour Organization (ILO), noted that combating gender inequalities in the world of work called for equal access to social protection. An enabling environment would be created by extending national social security systems more widely.

<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/Febo6/CSWEequality.html>

SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REMARKS ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

March 8, 2006 -(UN Press Release) I am delighted to be with you on this special day for women and men everywhere. Let me thank all of you for being here, and let me extend a warm welcome to the distinguished panelists who are here to help us celebrate the occasion.

http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/March06/Secretary_General.html

IRANIAN WOMEN RALLY FOR FREEDOM ON INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

March 8, 2006 - (WFAFI) - Hundreds of women, from all walks of life, took part in a rally to commemorate international women's day in Iran. Although an hour-long rally was to take place at 4 PM, women began to form large gatherings at 3 p.m. (local time) in Park-e Laleh and Park-e Daneshjoo both in central Tehran, north of Tehran University. Female university students joined the crowd with prepared banners and signs. Eyewitnesses report that as the crowd grew presence of security forces in plain clothing and official uniforms became more noticeable.

<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Iran/March06/8marchdemo.html>

INT'L WOMEN'S DAY: CONFLICT ONLY MAKES IT WORSE

March 7, 2006 -(IPS) The overriding obstacle that Arab women cite in their fight for freedom and equal rights in the Palestinian territories is the continuing conflict between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.

<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Israel-OPT/Mar06/conflict.html>

UNIFEM LAUNCHES DATABASE TO TRACK VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN

February 28, 2006 -(UNIFEM) A new pilot project to capture cases of violence against women in a comprehensive database has been launched by UNIFEM in Afghanistan. The database will be used to analyze trends and determine strategies to tackle the issue, including identifying gaps in nation-wide response mechanisms and service provision for victims.

http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Afghanistan/Febo6/Violence_Women.html

WOMEN IN DARFUR LOOK TO ICC

February 28, 2006 -(Institute for War & Peace Reporting) If you are a woman in the Darfur region of Sudan who has been raped and you want to lay a charge, it is virtually certain that legal officers will automatically reduce your allegation to one of assault. If you persevere with your rape accusation, you will be told to do the impossible and provide four male witnesses to support your charge.

http://www.peacewomen.org/news/Sudan/Febo6/Women_Darfur_ICC.html

UN NEEDS A HIGH-LEVEL WOMEN'S AGENCY

March 8, 2006 -(United Nations Document) Excerpt from a speech by Stephen Lewis, UN Special Envoy for HIV/Aids in Africa, on the occasion of International Women's Day. Delivered to an event hosted by the Women's Global Health Imperative, University of California, San Francisco, March 8, 2006.

http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/March06/High_Level_Women.html

IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT THE NUMBERS

March 8, 2006 -(IDEA News) Michelle Bachelet in Chile. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in Liberia. Angela Merkel in Germany. Maria do Carmo Silveira in Sao Tome and Principe. Luisa Diogo in Mozambique. Tarja Halonen in Finland. Helen Clark in New Zealand. These presidents and prime ministers are not the first women to lead countries, but they share a trait with the world's first democratically elected female president, Vigdis Finnbogadottir of Iceland: they were elected on their own merits.

<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/March06/Numbers.html>

INT'L WOMEN'S DAY: HANDFUL OF NATIONS REJECTS POLITICS AS USUAL
 March 6, 2006 -(Inter Press Service) Developing countries, particularly those emerging from armed conflict -- like Rwanda, Burundi, Iraq and Liberia -- are doing a better job at integrating women in politics than are most longstanding, established Western democracies, according to the Geneva-based Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU).

http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/March06/Womens_participation.html

JAMAICA TO GET WOMAN PRIME MINISTER FOR THE FIRST TIME

February 27, 2006. (The Scotsman). Jamaica is set to get its first woman prime minister after cabinet minister Portia Simpson Miller was elected leader of the nation's ruling political party. Mrs Simpson Miller, 60, beat three others to become leader of the People's National Party (PNP) in an emotionally charged election involving more than 3,800 party delegates.

<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/Febo6/Untitled-7.html>

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For more country-specific women, peace and security news, please visit:

<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/countryindex.html>

For more international women, peace and security news, please visit:

<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/International/Index.html>

3. FEATURE STATEMENT

An Open Letter on Women & UN Reform to the Secretary General and Member States from NGOs present at the 50th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

March 6, 2006, UN Headquarters, New York, NY

For more than six decades, women's groups and others from around the world have been strong supporters of the United Nations. We have actively shaped the UN's work on peace, human rights, development, security and environmental issues, and, of course, on gender equality. The UN is at a critical juncture. In the 2005 World Summit, women's organizations successfully advocated for greater commitments on gender equality and expected to see these commitments implemented in the UN reform follow-up.

We are disappointed and frankly outraged that gender equality and strengthening the women's machineries within the UN system are barely noted, and are not addressed as a central part of the reform agenda. Again, we must ask how it can be that more than ten years after the commitment to gender parity at the Beijing Conference, the UN is still offering only token representation of women on critical committees, high level expert panels and in senior positions within the organization.

Women welcomed Paragraph 59 in the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, in which governments undertook to "strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender." This commitment made by world leaders will not be met unless gender equality issues and women's machineries are an integral part of the UN reform process. Yet, mechanisms and processes dealing with UN reform have failed to display a consistent and visible commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment. For example, the new High-Level Panel on UN system-wide coherence in areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment has only 3 women out of 15 members. We urge that additional women be added to the panel and that gender equality issues be explicitly considered under each theme. Furthermore, the panel should be mandated to hold consultations with civil society groups, especially those working on women's rights, in order to ensure consideration of the impact on women of any proposed reforms.

Women's groups call for serious consideration to be given to the implications of the current reforms on the women's equality agenda. We reiterate the call made at Beijing +10 and the 2005 World Summit for the Secretary General and Member States to significantly strengthen, upgrade and better resource the systems and mechanisms, including the UN women's machineries, through which gender equality can be advanced at the international and country level. This could be a lasting legacy.

In addition, we are deeply concerned that the position of women in high-level UN posts has stagnated. The list of candidates for the position of the executive director of UNEP contains no women at all. This is unacceptable. At the very least, the UN should set an example of gender balance in all high-level decision making positions.

The pattern of publicly adopted commitments and statements followed by lack of implementation sets a disheartening precedent which retards the work and reputation of the United Nations and impedes the urgently-needed progress of gender equality worldwide. We urge you to take the opportunity in your address to the CSW on International Women's Day to announce concrete proposals for advancing gender equality and strengthening gender machineries in the context of UN reform. In addition, we urge Member States to explicitly address gender equality concerns in all aspects of UN reform.

Initiating Organizations:

Center for Women's Global Leadership
 Women's Environment Development Organization
 Women's International League for Peace and Freedom
 NGO Committee on the Status of Women

The letter and list of signatories can be found at:

http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW50/NGO_Links_Docs_PDF/March8_letter_SG.doc

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The above letter was endorsed by more than 300 women from over 50 countries. The initiating organizations also held a press conference on 6 March, 2006 (during the CSW) to highlight the issues and to encourage the Secretary General and Member States to address gender equality concerns in all aspects of UN Reform. We encourage you to take up the issues raised in this letter in your advocacy on the national, regional and international level. For this purpose we have developed a short summary of some of the crucial points.

Related documents and links:

For Highlights of the Open Letter:

http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW50/NGO_Links_Docs_PDF/Highlights_Open_Letter.doc

For translations of the Open Letter:

French: http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW50/NGO_Links_Docs_PDF/Open_Letter_French.doc

Spanish: http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW50/NGO_Links_Docs_PDF/Open_Letter_Spanish.doc

For the press release:

<http://wedo.org/files/cswPressRelease.doc>

For a summary of the press conference:

http://www.un.org/News/briefings/docs/2006/060306_Women_NGOs_PC.doc.htm

For a webcast of the press conference:

<http://www.un.org/webcast/pc2006.htm>

4. FEATURE RESOURCE

Women and PeaceBuilding in Africa

Report of Policy Seminar hosted by The Centre for Conflict Resolution, Cape Town & UNIFEM

27-28 October, 2005

Rapporteurs: Ms Yaliwe Clarke and Dr Helen Scanlon

This report on "The Impact of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security in Africa," is from a seminar hosted by the Centre for Conflict Resolution (CCR) in Cape Town, South Africa, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)'s Southern and Central African Regional Offices. The aim of the seminar was to review the progress of the implementation of the resolution in Africa in the five years since its adoption by the United Nations (UN) in 2000. As the Report's Executive Summary notes:

The seminar created a forum for over 40 participants, including representatives from the United Nations, the African Union (AU), the Southern African Development Community (SADC), the New

Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), academics, civil society groups and other policymakers, to assess the progress, relevance and future significance of Resolution 1325 to peace and security concerns on the African continent. It also investigated the current debates over restructuring the UN in light of the resolution and its implication for the future of peacebuilding interventions in Africa. The meeting further provided a platform for women working in conflict zones across the continent to share their experiences of the successes and challenges associated with engendering peacemaking, peacebuilding and peacekeeping.

The report tracks the seminar's themes and debates and then makes a number of conclusions and recommendations. The areas considered are:

- The Role of the United Nations in Implementing Resolution 1325: Linking UN Reform to African Realities of Engendering PeaceWomen
- The African Union and Women, Peace and Security
- Implementing 1325: Efforts by Africa's Regional Economic Communities
- Implementing Resolution 1325 at the National Level
- Resolution 1325 as a Tool for Women's Peace Activism: Opportunities and Challenges.

The full report, once available electronically, will be available at: <http://ccrweb.ccr.uct.ac.za/>

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For NGO and civil society reports, papers and statements, UN and government reports, and books, journals and articles on women, peace and security issues, please visit: <http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/resourcesindex.html>

5. FEATURE INITIATIVE

Women, Peace and Security Resolution in the Serbian Parliament

Women in Black in Belgrade have been advocating for the passing of a law on Women, Peace and Security in Serbia. The draft resolution below was introduced to the Serbian Parliament on 31 October, 2005, to commemorate the 5th Anniversary of Resolution 1325 and Women in Black continue to support the process of its passage.

Extracts from the Preamble to the Draft Resolution:

The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia

- *Beginning from the expressed wish of citizens of Serbia to live in a prosperous and democratic state in which on the basis of the full equality of all citizens, security is guaranteed to every human being;*
- *Keeping in mind that on 31 October 2000 the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1325 which insists on the importance of the participation of women and the inclusion of a gender perspective in peace processes, the protection of women in crisis and war zones from violence, in particular sexual violence, as well as the inclusion of a gender perspective in mechanisms for the application of peace treaties;*
- *Taking into consideration Resolution 53/144 of the United Nations General Assembly, as well as the Resolution of the European Parliament "The Holocaust, anti-Semitism, and racism";*
- *Believing that the interests of all Serbian citizens for peace and security are the highest state and national interests;*
- *Knowing that without affirmation of the interests of women for active and effective participation in the establishment of a lasting and stable peace and security for all members of the community, there is no possibility for insuring the protection of peace and security;*
- *Taking into consideration the tragic experiences from the war period in which our country participated;*
- *Taking into particular account own responsibility for the future of the Republic of Serbia and its citizens, as well as the interests of peace, stability, and security in the country, the region, Europe, and the world,*

The National Assembly of the Republic of Serbia is passing: Resolution: Women, Peace, Security

For the draft resolution please visit:

http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/1325/PDF/Serbia_1325_DraftResolution.doc

For more information:

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For more Global & Regional Initiatives, please visit:

<http://www.peacewomen.org/campaigns/global/index.html>

For more Country-specific Initiatives, please visit:

<http://www.peacewomen.org/campaigns/countriesindex.html>

6. FEATURE EVENT

The 50th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women – 27 February – 10 March 2006 Agreed Conclusions & Resolutions

Resolutions

In its fiftieth session, the Commission on the Status of Women, in addition to adopting agreed conclusions on the two themes under consideration, took decisions on a number of thematic resolutions and on its future organization and methods of work. The resolutions adopted concerned: women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS; the advisability of a Special Rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women; the situation of assistance to Palestinian women; the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan; and the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts.

For the full text of these resolutions please visit:

http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW50/UN_docs_links.htm

Draft Agreed Conclusions:

Enhancing Participation of Women in Development through an Enabling Environment for Achieving Gender Equality and the Advancement of Women

For full text please visit:

http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW50/UN_Links_Docs_PDF/Agreed_Conclusions_EE.pdf

Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on political participation and leadership

For full text please visit:

http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW50/UN_Links_Docs_PDF/Agreed_Conclusions_EP.pdf

Future Organization and Methods of Work of the Commission on the Status of Women Summary of Outcome:

A significant outcome of the session was the agreement on the “Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women.” This is contained in a draft resolution (document E/CN.6/2006/L.8), which the CSW recommended the Economic and Social Council adopt. If adopted the Commission would consider one priority theme at each session which would be “based on the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.” The agreed priority themes for the

sessions in 2007, 2008 and 2009 are: the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child; financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women; and the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS. While each of these themes is very broad, the Division for the Advancement of Women is requested to arrange an event “to enable a preliminary discussion on the priority theme of the subsequent session.”

In considering the priority theme each year, the Commission will focus on accelerating implementation of previous commitments through general discussion and various interactive events. As is the current practice, the outcome of these discussions will be agreed conclusions intended to identify gaps and challenges in implementation and to make “action-oriented recommendations” for various stakeholders.

Parallel to policy development in relation to the priority theme, the Commission will evaluate progress on the implementation of the agreed conclusions on a priority theme from a previous session. The themes to be reviewed in 2007, 2008 and 2009 are: the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality; women’s equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution in post-conflict peacebuilding; and the equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels. This review segment will involve an interactive dialogue to identify means to accelerate implementation and the outcome will be in the form of a Chairperson’s summary.

The consideration of an emerging issue will continue in future sessions through an interactive expert panel and the result of this discussion will also be in the form of a Chairperson’s summary.

The resolution also contains an invitation to all “gender-specific United Nations entities and other relevant United Nations entities, [such as CEDAW], to contribute, to the discussion on the priority theme. Earlier drafts of this resolution had included more specific and stronger references to reporting to the Commission by the CEDAW Committee and Special Rapporteurs., and It called for the creation of stronger and more formal links between the CSW and other UN processes and entities dealing with gender equality. As it stands this reference to contributions by various entities is fairly weak and it is hoped that in future UN reform discussions these links will be strengthened.

Women’s rights advocates present at the session consider it vital that implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action be the basic framework for the Commission’s work. It is also vital to ensure the participation of non-governmental organizations in the Commission’s consideration of the themes. Earlier drafts of the resolution had attempted to solidify the participation of non-governmental organizations in the processes outlined above, but these explicit references were lost in the final negotiation. There is, however, a reference to the “traditional importance of non-governmental organizations in the advancement of women” and, reference to previous resolutions of the Economic and Social Council that call for their participation.

A review of the functioning of the revised methods of work will take place at the Commission’s fifty-third session.

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CSW ON THE PEACEWOMEN WEBSITE

The PeaceWomen Project has web pages on the 50th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women featuring:

- UN Documents & links,
- NGO Documents & links,
- Governmental Participation
- Methods and Program of Work of the CSW

For these pages please visit: <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ecosoc/CSW50/CSW50index.htm>

7. A GENDER AND PEACEKEEPING UPDATE

Security Council Open Meeting on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeeping Personnel 23 February 2006, UN Headquarters, New York

The United States, as President of the Security Council in the month of February, convened a Security Council Public meeting to discuss the issue of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by Peacekeeping Personnel. The Council received briefings on progress made in eradicating this problem from the Under-Secretary-General for

Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guehenno and the Adviser to the Secretary-General on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, Prince Zeid Ra'ad Zeid Al-Hussein.

The Security Council also heard statements from Council and non-council member states, with all expressing support for measures undertaken by the Secretary-General and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, to prevent and eradicate this form of abuse. In their remarks, a number of states also drew attention to the importance of integrating gender perspectives in peacekeeping operations, including the enhancement of women's participation in all peace processes, as called for in Security Council Resolution 1325.

For the statements delivered by Under-Secretary-General Guehenno, and Prince Zeid Al-Hussein, as well as excerpts from countries' statements, please see:

http://www.peacewomen.org/un/pkwatch/Events/OpenDebates/SEA_o6.html

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2006 Session of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (C-34)

27 February -17 March 2006

The Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations convened between the 27th of March and the 17th of March 2006 for its annual "Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects." The session began with a 2-day General Debate during which member states addressed the committee on current priorities and challenges in peacekeeping operations. Most states welcomed measures taken in the past year to implement a zero tolerance policy on acts of sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeeping personnel, but a few states also highlighted the importance of gender mainstreaming in this context. A number of statements made during the debate also touched on issues such as gender training, increasing women's participation in peace operations, and related challenges. Below are selected excerpts from countries' statements:

Fiji

Security Council Resolution 1325 calls inter alia for:

1. Increased women participation in conflict resolution and peace processes
2. Appointment of women as SG's Special Representatives.
Member states to provide names of women capable of holding the jobs for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster.
3. Expand role of women in UN Peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO) as military observers, civilian policemen, in Human Rights, and humanitarian personnel
4. Special measures on women and children during armed conflict
5. Respect refugee camps
6. During disarmament –differentiate between male and female ex-combatants

Towards this end, we ask for the inclusion of dedicated gender training expertise in the ITS and for the strengthened capacity in field mission training cells, including the systematic collaboration with gender advisers. We urge fellow troop contributing countries to use or strengthen gender sensitivity training resources, for national pre-deployment preparation. Fiji now conducts gender specific recruitment drive both for the military and police forces. The cost of conducting women training in an environment long dominated by males can be expensive as some infrastructures and logistical support functions have to be duplicated. Recently more than 300 girls turned up for military recruitment; unfortunately we had to disappoint 250 of them as we only had 50 places available. Surges in interests of women and girls in this area promise brighter days for gender mainstreaming and the realization of requirements of Security Council resolution 1325.

Gender sensitive training will not obviate the continuous need for women participation in peacekeeping operations. We all come from nations with different cultural backgrounds, different religions and different levels of development but one thing common among us is that we give our women a special place in our societies. This special place can be blurred in countries emerging from conflicts as pressing needs will indicate changing priorities. It is our contention that only a woman can fully appreciate and empathize with another woman who may have nothing left but her pride and instinct for survival. We therefore believe that the role of women in peacekeeping operations and peacemaking processes is not only crucial but their physical presence a dire necessity.

Guyana (on behalf of the Rio Group)

The Rio Group notes that reference to gender mainstreaming appears in the Addendum to the report, but is surprised to meet that the goal of gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping operations is not included among the priorities outlined in the report itself. In light of the concern expressed by Member States regarding sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping operations, it is more important than ever that gender-mainstreaming in peacekeeping operations is accorded due priority. In addition to being a tool for the empowerment of local women and girls, gender-mainstreaming is an important tool for changing the “boys will be boys” culture within the missions themselves.

India

Mr. Chairman, in response to the Secretary-General’s call for increased representation of female personnel in field missions, we are contributing lady military and police officers to a number of UN Missions. We have recently pledged to send a full Female Formed Police Unit to UN Mission in Liberia (UNIMIL). This also reflects India’s commitment to assist the UN in reaching out to the most vulnerable sections, i.e. women and children, in conflict and post-conflict societies.

Kazakhstan

We note with satisfaction that the growing understanding in the recent years of the place and role of women in peacemaking and peacekeeping. Thus, an enhanced role of women in the area of peacekeeping and security and ending violence against women is a priority for UNIFEM and other interested bodies of the United Nations. In 2005, the United Nations Security Council devoted a meeting to a review of the implementation of the Council resolution 1325(2000) on women and peace and security. The delegations repeatedly indicated that women’s involvement in making decision regarding security and in peace processes had a very positive effect on peaceful resolution of conflicts and post-conflict peacemaking.

Malaysia

..We also attach importance to the need to enhance gender perspective in the peacekeeping activities and their potential role in preventing sexual exploitation and abuses and all its related aspects. We therefore look forward for the policy dialogue between DPKO and TCC to review strategies for enhancing gender balance among uniformed personnel in peacekeeping operations.

Namibia

At the initiative of Namibia, the Security Council held an open debate on Women and Peace and Security, which culminated in the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We did so because of our strong conviction that women can play an important role, as equal partners, in conflict prevention and in the maintenance of international peace and security. In this connection, Namibia has always deployed women as MILOBS, staff officers, contingent members and civilian police officers in the United Nations peacekeeping operations. We are therefore encouraged and welcome the fact that DPKO is organizing a workshop on 28-29th March 2006, to discuss the participation of women in peacekeeping operations.

New Zealand (on behalf of the CANZ group)

[W]e welcome DPKO’s focus on establishing procedures for gender mainstreaming throughout the Department’s operations, including through the impending Seminar, for implementing the elements of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), as this will also assist in our struggle to eliminate sexual exploitation and abuse.

Norway

Norway welcomes the Swedish proposal for the UN to add civilian observers to its instruments available for peace missions. This is an interesting idea that merits further consideration. This would broaden the recruitment base and make a better gender balance in the UN missions more

achievable. At the same time we fully agree that there are many questions that need to be addressed before we can make a final decision. We therefore support the Swedish proposal for an expert meeting to review political, legal and practical implications.

We still have a long way to go to ensure women's involvement in conflict resolution in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Together with the UK, the Netherlands and the DPKO, Norway has organized missions to selected peace operations to examine the implementation of 1325 in the field. We have offered to finance a study for the DPKO on lessons learned and best practices regarding how effective implementation of a gender perspective can contribute to the success of a peace mission. On International Women's Day the Norwegian government will launch a national action plan on the implementation of 1325. Copies will be distributed to all UN missions, as we believe that many of the elements of the plan will be relevant for all UN member states."

For more statements and information on the 2006 session of the Special Committee on peacekeeping, please see: <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/pkwatch/Events/C34/2006Index.html>

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For **PeaceWomen's Peacekeeping Watch index**, visit: <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/pkwatch/pkwatch.html>

For more gender and peacekeeping news, visit **PeaceWomen's Gender and Peacekeeping News Index**: <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/pkwatch/pknews.html>

8. UPDATE FROM THE NGO WORKING GROUP ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Messages from Women Peacebuilders at the CSW

During the 50th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, two leading women peacebuilders joined the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security at United Nations headquarters to advocate for the full and effective implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325. Ms. Leymah Gbowee from WIPNET, Liberia and Ms. Shobha Gautam from Shantimalika, Nepal issued the following messages:

Enabling Women's Active Participation in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding in Liberia

After 25 years of civil strife and conflict in which women and children bore the greatest brunt, and after years of struggle by the women's movement in Liberia to bring their plight to the attention of the world, the women of Liberia have achieved a landmark through the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf as Liberia and Africa's first elected female president.

The women of Liberia, specifically the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) continue to commit themselves to the process of post-conflict peacebuilding.

WIPNET Liberia has identified the following areas as the priority in the post-conflict peacebuilding process:

- Develop a national peacebuilding agenda on women, peace and security (Using SCR 1325, Liberian Women Vision for peace and the Regional WIPNET Gender policy framework) to ensure that the peace and security needs of women are integrated through national programs.
- Designing local peacebuilding programs to address the needs of women in decision-making at the community level. To this effect Liberian women have undertaken the construction of 17 "Peace huts" to serve as the space where local community women can continue the discussion on issues of peace and security at the local level and their inclusion in the process of decision making.
- Continues advocacy on rehabilitation and reintegration needs of women.
- Engaging in the process of sharing best practices in community peacebuilding processes with regional and international partners.

Aware of the enormity of the task highlighted above WIPNET is offering to collaborate with governments, institutions and regional organizations working in the promotion of women's involvement at decision-making levels using UN SCR 1325 as their advocacy and policy-influencing tool.

As we celebrate the 50th session on the Commission the Status of Women and as we continue the discussion towards making UNSCR 1325 practicable, WIPNET is calling on women's groups and organizations to build links across continents - as this is the only way to increasing women participation in decision making levels in peace and security.

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The Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal (IHRICON) Demands Democracy and Women's Human Rights in Nepal

Nepal is a landlocked country of South Asia, situated between two larger countries-India and China. Until one decade ago, Nepal was a peaceful country known for Mt. Everest and the birth place of Gautam Buddha. In 1990 a multiparty democratic system was established in Nepal from a people's movement and in 1991 a new constitution was written. This did not, however, include equal rights for women and indigenous groups. In 1996, after the democratic government failed to satisfy people's needs and fell into corruption, the paramilitary Maoist movement started, demanding forty social and political points for people's rights, commencing outbreak of a civil war which has seen considerable violence, loss of life and displacement of people. Now the identity of Nepal in the world is a country suffering from escalating conflict, where people's fundamental rights, democratic rights, rights to freedom and expression and rights to free movement are curtailed by the King Gyanendra who took over the executive power of the country in February 2005.

Actions taken by IHRICON in partnership with other women's organizations:

- In 2000 the establishment of IHRICON- (Institute of Human Rights Communication Nepal) to protect the rights of the women and children during the conflict. Started conflict prevention, especially involving women in the Peace Process using Security Council Resolution 1325. Since then IHRICON is involved in the mediation and negotiation process involving women at the grassroots level, providing human rights training to the security forces and the Moaists, to protect the women and children rights during the conflict.
- In 2003 the establishment of Shantimalika- a national women's peace movement to implement SCR 1325 at all levels of the peace process from grassroots to international level.
- August 2005- Shantimalika conducted the first national women's peace conference inviting women from all over the country and formed the Peace dialogue women and do outreach to the two conflicting parties.

IHRICON calls for support of:

- Making a strong women peace movements to include women from grassroots to international level in all kinds of decision making peace process relating to SCR 1325.
- The development of SCR 1325 as simple and familiar language to be implemented at all levels.
- Lobbying to the political parties and leaders to involve women in all levels of the peace process.
- Protection of NGO staff in Nepal who face threats working in the current conflict.
- The organization and implementing peace training to women all over South Asia.
- Holding a South Asian Peace Forum for grassroots women all over South Asia.
- The creation of a peace women international network of NGOs all for advocacy and lobby for full involvement in all kinds of decision making in the peace process.
- The involvement of civil society and women in the UN Peacebuilding Commission and implementation of SCR 1325 at the national level by all Member States.

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For more information visit: <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ngo/wg.html>

9. UNIFEM UPDATE Promoting Gender Equality in New Aid Modalities and Partnerships

A new UNIFEM note, "Promoting Gender Equality In New Aid Modalities and Partnerships" was an outcome of an international consultation held in November 2005, organized by UNIFEM and the European Commission. The recommendations made in this note are intended to guide policy-makers as they adjust to a new

international aid effectiveness agenda. The note highlights to the need to ensure: adequate financing for programmes that respond to women's needs; accountability systems for governments and donors to track and enhance their contributions to gender equality; and gender-sensitive progress assessments, performance monitoring and indicators for aid effectiveness. The note calls on several examples to from Mozambique to India to highlight the costs and benefits to the explicit exclusion and inclusion of women in national fiscal planning and monitoring systems. For the complete note please see the "New Publications" section of www.womenwarpeace.org

UNIFEM's Web Portal on Women, Peace and Security: <http://www.womenwarpeace.org>

10. WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY CALENDAR

Peacekeeping, Reconstruction and Stability Operations in Africa: Deploying Successful Support, Peacekeeping and Developmental Missions in Africa

March 27 -31 2006, Indaba Hotel, Fourways, Johannesburg, South Africa

Organized by the International Quality and Productivity Centre, this conference will highlight case studies and solutions to challenges in AU and UN Peace Support Operations, Post-Conflict Reconstruction and conflict prevention in Africa.

For more information on this event , please visit: <http://www.peacewomen.org/un/pkwatch/Events/IQDC.pdf>

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Women, Action & The Media: Making Noise, Making Change

March 31 - April 2 2006, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA

The Center for New Words is hosting the third annual Women, Action & the Media (WAM!) conference, which will bring together more than 300 participants for over two days of meeting, discussing, and exchanging observations, ideas, experiences, opinions, tools and action to bring women's voices into the media and public policy discussion.

Keynote Speakers: Farai Chideya, Maria Hinojosa, Caryl Rivers

For more information contact:

Jaclyn Friedman

cnw@centerfornewwords.org

617-876-5310

Center for New Words: <http://www.centerfornewwords.org/wam2006.html>

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Seminar : Gender in Civil-Military Relations - Moving Towards Inclusion

April 10-12, 2006, Landgoed Huize Bergen, the Netherlands

Presented by the Civil-Military Co-operation Centre of Excellence (CCOE) in co-operation with Cordaid, Genderforce and Shevolution

Women are in the front line of modern conflicts, often deliberately targeted. Based on lessons and field experiences from Africa, the Balkans, Asia and the Middle East, this event looks at eminently practical ways for military forces and other parties to incorporate gender into all aspects aspect of Civil Military Relations, including Disarmament, Demobilisation and Rehabilitation, Quick Impact Projects, support for displaced persons and refugee returnees and stabilisation and public security.

For more information, please visit:

http://www.peacewomen.org/frame/calendar/fliers/CIMIC_Vught_seminar.pdf

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Advanced International Training Programme: Gender and Peacebuilding

April 10-14, 2006 Cluj-Napoca, Romania, TRANSCEND and the Peace Action, Training and Research Institute of Romania (PATRIR)

A Five-Day International Training Programme for Practitioners, Policy Makers, International and National Agency Staff and NGOs working in peacebuilding, conflict transformation and post-war recovery. This course offers an introduction to gender studies, analysis of the complex relationships between gender and social constructions and between gender, race and class privileges. During the course the interdependency between gender and power is explored and there is focus on theory and practices of gender roles in different societies. The course will seek to explore how understanding of gendered social constructions can help in addressing gender inequalities and promote gender equity and cultures of peace.

For more information, please visit: http://www.peacewomen.org/frame/calendar/training_program.html

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14th Annual International Conference On Conflict Resolution

May 5 - 15, 2006, The Common Bond Institute, St. Petersburg, Russia

The ICR Conference offers an open forum for many perspectives and approaches, exploring conflict transformation within diverse contexts, including: arts/creativity, cross-cultural/ ethnic, ecology/environment, economics/business, education, gender, global/regional conflict, health/healing arts, human rights, organizational/community, psychotherapy, and transpersonal/ spiritual. Focus is on all aspects of conflict, from the intrapersonal - to the interpersonal - to relationships between groups, organizations, cultures, and societies - and ultimately between us and other species.

Following the ICR Conference an intensive International Training in Trauma Treatment is held for relief workers from regions of conflict.

PARTICIPATION: Participants have come from over 65 countries and all continents, providing excellent networking opportunities. The program attracts key stakeholders in their respective societies, some from both sides of existing conflicts, who can model and teach these skills to many others.

For more information, please see visit: http://www.cbiworld.org/Pages/Conferences_ICR.htm

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3rd Annual International Youth Conference: "The Ecology Of War And Peace"

May 5-15, 2006, Formal Conference Program: May 6-11. Common Bond Institute, St. Petersburg, Russia

A parallel youth conference, held at the same time and location as the Annual International Conference on Conflict Resolution (ICR), addressing issues of negative stereotypes, prejudice, and scapegoating that lead to demonizing and dehumanizing "The Other." The theme of ecology is used as a common ground all parties can resonate with being "on the same side" of, as they delve into personal interactions to explore these dynamics and help to empower each other as the future leaders of the world.

For information, proposal and registration forms, Contact:
COMMON BOND INSTITUTE (USA), Steve Olweean, Coordinator
12170 S. Pine Ayr Drive, Climax, Michigan 49034
Ph/Fax: 269-665-9393
E-mail: SOlweean@aol.com

For more information, please visit: http://www.cbiworld.org/Pages/Conferences_EWP.htm

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For the complete calendar, visit: <http://www.peacewomen.org/frame/calendar/calendar.html>

The PeaceWomen is a project of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom:
<http://www.wilpf.int.ch/>.

Previous issues of 1325 PeaceWomen E-news can be found on-line at
<http://www.peacewomen.org/news/1325News/1325ENewsindex.html>

At this time the Newsletter is only available in English. The PeaceWomen Team hopes to translate the

Newsletter into French and Spanish in the future. If you would not like to receive the English News Letter but would like to be placed on a list when translation is possible please write to enewssubmissions@peacewomen.org

To unsubscribe from the 1325 PeaceWomen E-News, reply to this email with "unsubscribe" as the subject heading.

Questions, concerns and comments and other submissions should be directed to enewssubmissions@peacewomen.org.

Best Wishes,
PeaceWomen Team

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