

Ministerial Meeting on Security Council resolution 1325: A call to action
Saturday, 25 September 2010
9:30am – 12:00pm, Conference Room 4 (North Lawn Building)

Mary Robinson's Remarks

I am honoured to have been asked by Deputy Secretary-General Dr. Asha-Rose Migiro to chair a Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) to the UN on Women, Peace and Security. CSAG advises the High-Level Steering Committee of the heads of United Nations agencies and entities on ensuring a coherent and coordinated approach to implementing UNSCR 1325 within the UN system. In addition to recommending priorities for commemorating the 10th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325, CSAG advocates for the full participation of women's groups and civil society in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. Together with my co-chair, Bineta Diop, ED of Femmes Africa Solidarite, we have a distinguished group of women and men committed to this task.

Ten years after the Security Council adopted resolution 1325, the promise of this resolution has not been realized.

To date, we have seen successes in a number of areas –

- ✓ Member states and regional organizations are starting to take actions. There are now 21 National Action Plans on 1325 and that number is increasing; several Regional Action plans are being developed; and there have been innovative efforts at cross-border twinning and cross-learning.
- ✓ The UN Security Council has adopted 3 additional Women, Peace and Security Resolutions in the last 2 years that have strengthened the call for accountability on the women, peace and security agenda
- ✓ The Secretary-General has appointed 10 female SRSGs and DSRSGs and 2 Special Envoys in the last 3 years;
- ✓ UN Women and the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict are signs that the UN is serious on coherence on women, peace and security work.

However, much remains to be done to gain real results for women on the ground. Impunity for crimes against women in conflict-affected countries remains the norm; women face real security risks when they try to make their voices heard and are often excluded from the planning processes that determine their future. Women peace-builders are woefully underfunded.

We are here today – Member States, Security Council members, UN leadership and Civil Society representatives – because we share the responsibility for achieving the broader aims of the Women, Peace and Security agenda: empowering women's participation in all aspects of peacemaking and post-conflict governance; ensuring the protection of women in conflict; and engaging women in the key area of conflict prevention.

UN ACTORS

The UN system has lagged in implementing the women, peace and security agenda in part because of the absence of a clear lead, adequate technical capacity, a monitoring capability, and accountability systems. Things are changing.

The creation of the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) shows that the UN system is committed to a considerable strengthening of its coherence and coordination when it comes to gender mainstreaming, including its women, peace and security work.

We in civil society look forward to UN Women leading on women, peace and security, supporting coordination, coherence, providing technical support, and monitoring. UN women will be an essential and powerful partner to the SRSG on Sexual Violence in Conflict in building the UN system's resolve and capacity on women, peace and security. We look forward to UN Women to continue as the lead in the efforts to refine, pilot, and populate the global indicators on Women, Peace and Security, and to building inter-agency collaboration around this process.

We also look forward to further UN system coherence, such as the 7 point action plan developed in the Secretary-General's report on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding. This is one of the most pragmatic proposals in years to address the barriers to how the UN and Member States approach security and peacebuilding.

MEMBER STATES

Effective implementation of 1325 requires specific actions, procedures, and changes in how we approach the security field. Member State support for UN Women is of course critical at this juncture to enable it to build capacity to be the system guide on women, peace and security.

Member state support is also needed for specific programs on the ground in conflict-affected countries, such as gender equality in peacemaking and peacebuilding; and ensuring gender issues are addressed in mediation, post-conflict planning, post-conflict elections, financing recovery, civilian response capacity, justice and security sector reform, and economic recovery. For example, earmarking at least 15% of funds for women's empowerment in recovery and peacebuilding programmes sends a powerful message and concrete support to these processes.

SECURITY COUNCIL

The 10th anniversary of SCR 1325 is a defining moment: The Security Council is being presented with the tools it needs to build a pragmatic programme of accelerated implementation of SCR 1325. We urge the Council to endorse the global set of indicators on women, peace and security, and to support the interagency plan developed in the Report of the Secretary General on Women's Participation in Peacebuilding.

In addition, the Council must ensure its own responsibilities on Women, Peace and Security are systematically met in its daily work to maintain and support international peace and security. This includes systematic procedures to ensure that mediators consult with women and ensure negotiators dialogue with women's groups. Consultation with women's groups is always appropriate and will lead to a more effective process – thus, they should be mandatory in every peace negotiation.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society's concrete involvement in all aspects of peacebuilding is essential. Women are often at the front lines of conflict, facing the realities of violence while trying to create peace. Involving women in the processes that end these conflicts leads to stronger and more lasting solutions. We recognize our responsibility to bring the voices of those women into all of our work at the international level, including this discussion today.

COMMITMENTS

The focus of today's meeting is concrete action by all Member States. Financial commitments are always welcome but your support and investment in commitments on policy, monitoring and civil society engagement is invaluable.

We hope the commitments will address gaps in the implementation of SCR 1325 and respond directly to the needs of women in countries that have experienced conflict. Commitments should be: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.

We are pleased to launch a creative, new initiative, the commitments database, that has been developed by UNIFEM (part of UN Women) and is hosted by the PeaceWomen Project on their website: www.peacewomen.org/commitments [*A screen shot of the commitments page will be projected*]

The database will compile commitments made by Member States, the UN and Civil Society on implementing SCR 1325.

Commitments can be submitted in 2 ways:

1. The 'commitments form' shared with you along with your invitations to the event (also available on the commitments website)
2. If your speech is publicly available, it will be directly quoted and loaded onto the website.

We shall start at today's meeting, and continue to document commitments through high-level milestone meetings like the Global Open Day for Women, Peace and Security on 21 Oct, and the Open Debate in the Security Council on 29 Oct.

We look to you now to be bold, generous, thoughtful, and visionary: to set the bar high and shape the direction of the Women, Peace and Security agenda for the next 10 years. Thank you.