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**STATEMENT BY SENATOR MOBINA JAFFER
ON BEHALF OF THE HUMAN SECURITY NETWORK**

TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE

ON

WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY

NEW YORK, 28 OCTOBER 2004



**DÉCLARATION DE
LA SÉNATRICE MOBINA JAFFER
AU NOM DU RÉSEAU DE LA SÉCURITÉ HUMAINE**

LORS DU DÉBAT OUVERT DU CONSEIL DE SÉCURITÉ DES NATIONS UNIES

SUR

LES FEMMES, LA PAIX ET LA SÉCURITÉ

NEW YORK, LE 28 OCTOBRE 2004

Mr. President,

I am pleased to address you today in Canada's capacity as current Chair of the Human Security Network, a cross-regional group of countries, which includes Austria, Chile, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland, Thailand, and South Africa as an observer. On behalf of the countries of the Human Security Network, I would like to express our appreciation to the United Kingdom for convening this open debate on women, peace and security – a priority issue for the Network – and welcome the compelling presentations made by today's panellists. The representation around the table reflects the expertise we have in the UN system and highlights the need to work collaboratively with the various arms of the UN.

I would also like to thank the Secretary General for his invaluable report, which marks the progress we have made and highlights the challenges we continue to face in implementing Security Council Resolution 1325.

We welcome the work the UN has already done to increase the representation of women in all institutions of the UN, but draw attention to the need for more work to be done in this area, particularly increasing representation of women at all levels of decision-making including as military observers, civilian police, peacekeepers, human rights and humanitarian personnel in UN field operations, and as special representatives of the Secretary General. Countries contributing personnel to peace support operations must, on their part, establish a viable recruitment base including the admission of women to their military and police services and appropriate training for all personnel which incorporates a gender perspective

Human Security Network members welcome the Conference on Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Situations, entitled "Peace Needs Women, and Women Need Justice," that was held September 15 to 17, 2004, in New York and was co-organized by the UNIFEM and the International Legal Assistance Consortium. The conclusions and recommendations of the conference represent a valuable contribution towards better understanding the importance of gender justice in the context of the overall effective implementation of the resolution 1325.

I would like to focus my remarks today on one key aspect of follow-up to 1325, gender-based violence.

Gender-based violence, including sexual abuse and exploitation, have become alarmingly pervasive during conflict. We know that hundreds of thousands of women and girls have been raped in situations of armed conflict, and that sexual exploitation continues to be used as a tool of war in many countries. We also know that there has been a dramatic increase in domestic violence in conflict and post-conflict zones. In his report on the protection of civilians in armed conflict last June, the Secretary-General argued we are "failing in our collective responsibility to protect women and children from the increasing horrors of sexual and gender-based violence". It is the role of the Security Council to work together with countries and governments, where they exist, to address such crimes.

applaud the efforts of the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop a strategy on sexual abuse and exploitation by UN peacekeepers.

Members of the Network have noted with interest the discussions which have taken place within the Special Committee on Peacekeeping on gender-based violence and conduct of peacekeepers. We call on all troop-contributing countries to ensure that their peacekeepers uphold the highest standard of conduct in their deployments, and to ensure that appropriate disciplinary measures are put in place and utilized when peacekeepers fail to live up to these standards. A decisive and engaged policy of zero tolerance with regard to gender-based violence is crucial.

Mr. President,

The international community recognizes that gender experts and expertise need to be included in all levels and aspects of peace operations, including technical surveys and the design concepts of their operation, training, staffing, and programmes – in the absence of such expertise and senior management support, our efforts to effectively address gender-based violence are significantly hindered. For strategies to be effective, they should build on expertise held by the female civilian population. As the Secretary General has noted, we need to recognize the extent of the violations of women and girls' human rights during armed conflict, and ensure that planning and implementation of all peace support operations factor in the need to respond to sexual and gender-based violence, including through more effective physical protection, monitoring and reporting.

In this regard, we urge the Security Council to be vigilant and to more systematically condemn widespread instances of sexual and gender-based violence in specific conflicts. It must also be prepared to respond to such violence in the design of peace support mandates, and by ensuring that a gender perspective is incorporated across the work of UN country teams. We would also encourage the Council to ensure that its missions to the field include an assessment of sexual and gender-based violence in its terms of reference, where appropriate, and that it meet with local women's groups and networks to get their perspective. The effectiveness of camps, DD&R installations and related infrastructure rely, to a large extent, on a physical design which reflects that women take part in modern day conflicts, also in the role of combatants.

In conclusion, members of the Network strongly urge the Council to give full consideration to the report of the Secretary General, and to the implementation of the recommendations therein. We would particularly like to highlight and support the Secretary General's intentions for comprehensive strategies and action plans to implement various elements of Resolution 1325.

We thank you, Mr. President, for today's debate which affords us the opportunity to measure our actions and those of the Council on implementing Resolution 1325 in order to eliminate gender-based violence. This is our time to recommit ourselves vigorously to the tenets of Resolution 1325 and produce tangible results.

Thank you Mr. President.