



The President of the Economic and Social Council

**Statement of the
President of the Economic and Social Council
H.E. Dr. Ivan Šimonović
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia
at the Public Meeting of the Security Council
on Women, Peace and Security
28 October 2002**

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Those of us, who have lived it, know the terrible impact of war. While women and girls endure the same trauma as the rest of the population, they are also targets of specific forms of violence and abuse, including sexual violence and exploitation. Moreover, their needs and their potential for contributions have generally tended to be at the margins of efforts to prevent armed conflict or to restore peace and rebuild economies and societies.

The Security Council's consideration of the subject of women, peace and security two years ago resulted in resolution 1325 (2000), a landmark in the recognition of importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance of peace and security, as well as, the need to increase women's role in conflict management, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building.

The study, the report, and the recommendations of the Secretary-General called for in that resolution, and now before the Security Council, constitute a very important step forward, with significant analysis and proposals for action. While resolution 1325 addressed a vital matter of economic, social and human rights concerns from the perspective of the Security Council, the present Study on Women, Peace and Security addresses those issues in a holistic manner offering a much broader perspective. We in ECOSOC have also been eagerly waiting to see the report and the study that now, when they are published, will require action from Member States, the United Nations system and civil society.

The section headings of both the report and the study are a catalogue of concerns for all of us -- Impact of armed conflict on women and girls; international legal framework; peace processes; peacekeeping operations; humanitarian operations; reconstruction and rehabilitation; and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. I would like to commend the participatory process of preparation of the SG's study on women, peace and security and its able coordination by Ms. Angela King, the Special

Adviser of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. It is my understanding that the UNIFEM's study on the same issues (embargoed until 31 October 2002) envisaged by its Executive Director, Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, and prepared by independent experts, will provide additional complementary information and recommendations for action.

Mr. President,

This past July ECOSOC adopted resolution 2002/23, on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. The Council called for action at all levels by Member States and all other actors of the United Nations system, and decided to intensify its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all activities in its work and that of its subsidiary bodies. This builds upon agreed conclusions adopted by ECOSOC in 1997, and it is a clear outcome of the decision to establish a regular sub-item on the subject in the work of the Council.

In that resolution ECOSOC identified several key elements for progress in gender mainstreaming that resonate well in today's deliberations. These include, first, identifying gender equality as an essential element for the realization of sustainable development at large, as it is an issue that cuts across all areas of policy; second, stressing the need to include women in planning, decision-making, and implementation processes at all levels; third, emphasizing the link between human rights and gender equality; fourth, recognizing that men and women are often affected differently by political, economic, social and environmental factors, and that policies need to address this; and fifth, calling for sex-differentiated data and indicators as essential elements for accurate analysis.

It is true that in recent years the understanding of and commitment to gender equality and gender mainstreaming has increased significantly. However, many persistent constraints remain, including conceptual confusion, inadequate understanding of the linkages in different areas of work, and gaps in capacity to address the necessary issues once identified. The report and recommendations before us today, on women, peace and security, make a great contribution by clarifying major findings, challenges and actions that are necessary in this important area. As stated by the Secretary-General, "Sustainable peace will not be achieved without the full and equal participation of women and men." I can assure you that the deliberations today in the Security Council will be of particular concern to ECOSOC as well. Relevant findings on women, peace and security, among others, represent a valuable guideline for the Council's newly established Ad hoc advisory group on Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. President,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Peace and security, and economic and social affairs are not just linked. It is important that we realize that they are different sides of the same coin, and that on this coin there is a face of a woman.

Thank you.