



# IRELAND

Statement by

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Security Council Open Debate  
On Women, Peace and Security

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## UN Security Council Debate on UNSCR 1325

Minister of State, Mary White T.D.

United Nations, New York

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Mr. President,

Ireland welcomes the opportunity to address the Security Council during this open debate which marks the tenth anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. Ireland is deeply committed to the principles enshrined in this groundbreaking Resolution and will continue to strive for its full implementation – both in Ireland and internationally.

Ireland has been very active on 1325 and has long been reflecting the spirit of the Resolution in its external actions. In order to formalise this commitment, my Department is working closely with other government departments, as well as members of civil society and academia, towards the development of an effective National Action Plan which we hope to launch early next year. This is our principal pledge here today.

As you are aware, Mr. President, Ireland launched a cross-learning initiative on 1325 in 2009. Yesterday afternoon, I had the honour to present the findings of this initiative to the head of UN Women, Under-Secretary General Michelle Bachelet. This innovative initiative involved participants from Timor-Leste, Liberia, Ireland and Northern Ireland and was designed to draw upon the experiences of those directly affected by conflict in order to discuss the most critical issues facing women and girls in conflict and post-conflict settings. The participants, experts in their field, met three times in Belfast, Northern Ireland; Dili, Timor-Leste and Monrovia, Liberia. Each meeting focussed on one of the three “P”s of 1325, namely Participation, Protection and incorporating gender Perspectives in policy-making and addressed issues such as transitional justice, mediation, gender-based violence and the application of international human rights and international humanitarian law.

While the outcome of the cross-learning initiative may not easily be quantified; it is our hope that the recommendations included in the final report will have a direct and immediate impact

on women experiencing conflict and that this impact will continue to resonate for years to come.

One important issue highlighted throughout the cross-learning initiative was the urgent need to fight against the culture of impunity in relation to sexual violence. Impunity and justice are mutually exclusive; to let perpetrators of sexual violence roam free is to tell their victims that the world is not listening. But we must listen. And we must act. Effective mechanisms must be put in place to bring perpetrators to justice and to send a clear message that such acts will no longer be tolerated. Crimes of a sexual nature must not be included in amnesties. Impunity must no longer be allowed to flourish. We have talked about a policy of zero tolerance – it is now time to stand together and demand that this policy be taken seriously.

Another central idea arising from the cross-learning initiative was the need to engage with men. Women, peace and security is not just a “women’s issue.” In order to achieve true gender equality, men and women must work side by side. We had several male gender champions involved in the initiative and their contribution to the process was invaluable. 1325 permeates all facets of conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict reconstruction and men involved in these processes must be convinced of the relevance of 1325 to their work. Given the patriarchal nature of many societies, men can and should become positive role models to younger boys and in this way, 1325 will become a global, normative issue as opposed to a “women’s issue.” Peace is not sustainable, nor can it be sustained, without the support of all members of society.

I would also like to take this opportunity to note Ireland’s warm support of Michelle Bachelet and the recently established UN Women. I am confident that this organisation’s core work will benefit the lives of women and girls who experience or have experienced the atrocities of conflict, in particular the atrocities that target them specifically. International support of this body will be integral to its success. I am delighted to confirm the pledge made by Ireland to commit \$1m to UN Women this year and look forward to hearing of its progress.

I would also like to pay tribute to the excellent work of Margot Wallström, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. She has focused the world’s attention on the recent, unacceptable spate of sexual violence in the Democratic Republic of Congo and, in doing so, is ensuring that action is being taken to bring the

perpetrators to justice. Her commitment and determination in her role as SRSG will be vital in transforming the current landscape of impunity to a legacy of zero tolerance.

Ireland also welcomes the recent report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security, noting in particular the comprehensive recommendations and the update on the set of indicators which will be used to track implementation of Resolution 1325 at the global level. We also warmly welcome the recent report of the Secretary-General on women's participation in peacebuilding, in particular its concrete and forward-looking seven-point action plan. The commitment to allocate 15% of UN-managed funds in support of peacebuilding to projects whose principal objective is to address women's specific needs, advance gender equality or empower women, is especially laudable.

The tenth anniversary of Resolution 1325 is an important milestone in the evolution of the women, peace and security agenda. Events marking this anniversary, both here in New York and worldwide, highlight the significant progress that has been achieved but also the long road yet to be travelled. Women are more visible in many areas, including peacekeeping, mediation and post-conflict recovery.

There is, however, no room for complacency, Mr. President. Recent events in the Democratic Republic of Congo alone highlight that much more remains to be done. The objectives and principles of 1325 underpin the core tenets of international human rights law, international humanitarian law as well as the UN Charter itself. The protection of women and girls from sexual violence in armed conflict as well as their participation in conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building is integral to the maintenance of international peace and security. Let us not forget this.

In this context, Mr. President, Ireland commends the Council's continued attention to Resolution 1325.

Thank you, Mr. President.