



THE PERMANENT MISSION OF  
**SOUTH AFRICA**  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

333 East 38th Street  
9th Floor  
New York, NY 10016  
Tel: (212) 213-5583  
Fax: (212) 692-2498  
E-mail: [soafun@worldnet.att.net](mailto:soafun@worldnet.att.net)

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**STATEMENT  
BY  
MR. XOLISA MABHONGO  
MINISTER COUNSELLOR**

**ON  
“WOMEN PEACE AND SECURITY”**

**SECURITY COUNCIL  
UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK**

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Mr. President,

It is an honour for my delegation to participate in today's Open Debate on the Fourth Anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement made by Canada on behalf of the Human Security Network.

Mr. President, in today's conflicts it is civilians, and women and children that bear the brunt of gross abuses of human rights. This notwithstanding, however, the time has come for the international community to recognize women not solely as victims in conflicts but to take note of the important role they play as key players in peace processes. A point was made during the UNIFEM/ILAC Gender Justice Conference in September 2004 that we must strive to integrate women's concerns more effectively in peace processes worldwide and achieve women's full, equal and effective participation in those processes.

Given the central role that women play in the social, political and economic development of our societies we believe that it is logical and morally right that the full realization of equal political and economic rights for women must be treated as an essential component of our collective approach to preventing and resolving conflicts. In most cases women usually do not have access to resources, political rights, authority and control over their environment. We therefore support the Secretary-General's recommendation that resources put into post-conflict phase should also cover programmes for women's empowerment. Our own experience in South Africa taught us that given a chance, women could bring an important and much needed perspective in all stages of peace processes and peace building.

Mr. President,

My delegation believes that Resolution 1325 remains a landmark document in the history of the United Nations. The resolution calls for special measures to protect women and girls from violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse. It also calls for the full inclusion of women in international peace and security processes. In addition the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) provides us with the necessary guidelines to respond to the needs of women in a comprehensive manner.

In the African context we have realized that the exclusion of women from political and economic decision-making is a significant obstacle to the realization of sustainable peace. The African Union has taken steps and adopted legislative measures to address this problem. South Africa is also making its contribution to support these efforts. Recently in South Africa we hosted a group of women from the DRC and Burundi to share experiences with the South African women, who, despite being the most vulnerable, managed to make their voices heard during our political transition. The success of the South African political transition is in no small measure a result of the pivotal role played by women.

Mr. President,

A number of initiatives have been put in place by the international community to address the question of gender mainstreaming, but more work still has to be done to ensure that all obstacles to women's equality are eliminated. My delegation believes that the full implementation of Resolution 1325 requires the resolve of Member States. It is also crucial that partnerships are formed with civil society to promote women's rights and participation in peace processes. Gender experts and expertise need to be included at all levels and aspects of peace operations.

Mr. President, women are victims of unbelievable atrocities and injustices in conflict situations and we need to put more effort in the monitoring and reporting of these atrocities. These efforts must be complemented by practical measures to end impunity and to bring those who are responsible for abhorrent crimes against women and girls to justice. In this regard, States must adopt legislation incorporating human rights and humanitarian and international criminal law into their own legal systems.

My delegation is of the view that the establishment of the International Criminal Court has strengthened the international legal framework in addressing these crimes against women and holds promise for meaningful accountability for gender-based crimes against women during armed conflict. However, for these measures to succeed, adequate resources, gender expertise and training for all staff as well as gender-sensitive programs for victim and witness protection is required.

We must uphold objectives of Resolution 1325. Women's rights must be protected and the obstacles to their equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace must be removed. We can uphold these objectives by eliminating all forms of gender-based violence during conflict and post-conflict situations. It is said that when women are safe, so are nations and when women feel secure, peace is possible.

In conclusion Mr. President my delegation supports the Secretary-General's report before the Council as well as all the initiatives undertaken by the entities of the United Nations system and Member States in implementing resolution 1325.

I thank you