

***EU Presidency Statement***

***on***

***Women Peace and Security***

**27 October, 2005**

**by**

**H.E. Sir Emyr Jones Parry, Permanent Representative of the  
United Kingdom to the United Nations**

**on behalf of the European Union on**

**Security Council Resolution 1325 - Women Peace and  
Security**

**United Nations, Security Council Open Debate (New York)**

**Security Council Open Meeting: SCR 1325, Women Peace and Security**  
**27 October 2005**

1. I have the honour to speak also on behalf of the European Union. The Acceding Countries Bulgaria and Romania, the Candidate Countries Turkey and Croatia, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, as well as the Republic of Moldova align themselves with this statement.

Opening Remarks

2. On behalf of the European Union I would like to extend my thanks to all the speakers at today's meeting and especially to our colleagues from Romania for bringing us together. Events such as this help to underline the importance of this landmark resolution. It is 5 years since SCR 1325 was passed. SCR 1325 is having an impact at the regional, national and international level. But we must not be complacent. More can and must be done.
3. SCR 1325 draws attention to the central role that women play in conflict resolution. We have seen many examples of the negative impact of excluding women from peace processes. All too often women are unable to participate on an equal footing with men in peace negotiations, peace agreements and the development of a stable society. We have heard from a number of speakers today who have first hand experience of how important it is to include women at all stages of the peace process. Their inclusion, along with all society, helps to ensure wider support for the peace process itself, increases legitimacy and contributes to building a comprehensive and sustainable peace.
4. Women remain marginalised in the processes of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction. Achieving sustainable peace will not be possible unless we make progress towards sustainable development and we can not achieve sustainable development without the full involvement of women in conflict prevention and post-conflict peacebuilding. Article 8 of the UN Charter and of the CEDAW convention both commit us to ensuring the equal participation of women in international relations. This commitment is crucial to the successful implementation of SCR 1325. But we must also apply this commitment to all levels of decision making - international, regional as well as at the national level.
5. There are, however, some important conditions for women to participate fully in all stages of the peacebuilding, reconstruction and development process. It is crucial they can enjoy their human rights and have access to services like education, basic healthcare, training and credit.

Peacebuilding Commission

6. One month ago our leaders reiterated that 'progress for women is progress for all' and reaffirmed their commitment to the full and effective implementation of SCR 1325. They also committed to establishing a Peacebuilding Commission which provides us

with an unique opportunity to create a UN system that is capable of building and sustaining peace. We must bring these commitments together if we are to develop a coherent and holistic approach to peacebuilding and guarantee a smooth and enduring transition to peace with the full involvement of all actors. Women must be able to participate in and benefit from peacebuilding activities.

7. A strong commitment to conflict prevention and peacebuilding can only be met by a strong commitment to ensure that all members of society are able to take an active role in building peace. It is therefore only by assuring the full inclusion of women in the political process that we can guarantee just and peaceful societies.
8. The EU believes that the Peacebuilding Commission should, as part of its mandate, ensure that women and women's groups are represented in peace processes, thus enabling them to play an essential role. Member States and organisations involved in the work of the Peacebuilding Commission should bear in the mind the desirability of gender balance in all meetings of the Peacebuilding Commission. National ownership of any peace process is vital to its success.
9. We know that the UN system is already doing much to ensure that the local population, and especially, women are able to play their part in peacebuilding efforts. The Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office should build on this.
10. The Peacebuilding Commission should ensure that all actors are fully involved in and benefiting from the peacebuilding process. It should also work to promote a more coherent and more integrated approach to peacebuilding that takes advantage of the experience and knowledge that woman can bring to the negotiating table. A gender equality perspective should be fully integrated in its recommendations, reports, activities, strategies, and best practice analyses. And, by bringing together peacekeeping operations and development partners, they can ensure that progress is made to integrate gender into the political process of a post-conflict country and is not lost once the immediate post-conflict phase ends. In short, the EU believes that the Peacebuilding Commission and its support office offers the international community a major opportunity to ensure that a gender perspective becomes a normal and integral part of any peacebuilding process. We hope that the Peacebuilding Commission can address the role of women in peacebuilding, to identify ways and means how the UN can further support this role, early in its life.
11. One important way the UN can support women's rights in post-conflict situations is by supporting legal systems to recognise and protect those rights. This is a significant role for the proposed new Rule of Law Assistance Unit. We hope the Unit not only helps the UN to give attention and resources to the establishment of the rule of law but also ensures women's access to and participation in justice. Both the Conference on Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Situations that was held in September 2004 in New York and the follow-up High-Level Meeting on 'Building Partnerships for

Promoting Gender Justice in Post-Conflict Societies' produced valuable gender-justice contributions.

#### EU Support for SCR 1325

12. The EU is considering a number of measures to implement SCR 1325 within our European Security and Defence Policy. We expect Ministers to endorse these at the 7 November General Affairs and External Relations Council. These measures recognise the important role that women play in promoting peace and security. They contribute to the EU's general approach to gender mainstreaming, and are a step towards a more systematic integration of a gender perspective in the EU's external relations.
13. The measures include:
  - Recognising the need for improved gender balance in ESDP operations, by ensuring that women are fully informed of, and encouraged to apply for, upcoming international assignments and vacancies [in particular senior positions and EU Special Representative positions];
  - Promoting the role of women in peace building through their participation in peace negotiations as well as establishing transitional governments and reconciliation structures;
  - Increasing dialogue with local and international women's groups;
  - Protecting women and girls affected by conflict, and
  - Training EU personnel, particularly those taking part in EU crisis management operations on gender and awareness raising.
14. The EU is also working within the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe to promote SCR 1325. A draft decision on Women in Conflict Prevention, Crisis Management and Post-Conflict Rehabilitation will be considered by the OSCE Ministerial Council (in December). The OSCE will use the Resolution to build on and reinforce the *2004 OSCE Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality*, which commits the OSCE Secretariat to develop further strategies to increase the number of women in the OSCE secretariat, its institutions, and its field missions.
15. We look forward to continuing to work in cooperation with the UN and regional organisations such as NATO and the AU, as well as with NGOs, in pursuing this work. Methods of systematic exchange of best practices should be included in the dialogue between the UN and regional organisations as reinforced through UNSCR 1639.

#### National Action Plans

16. We welcome the UN system-wide action plan produced by the Secretary-General, which will help ensure closer attention to gender perspectives in conflict prevention and peacekeeping activities. In this context we encourage the Secretary-General to continue to identify women candidates for senior level positions within the UN system, including as Special Representatives. As we move towards implementation, co-ordination within the UN will continue to be key. The many initiatives in areas

such as training and capacity building must be mutually reinforcing, resources should be wisely used and ideas and expertise ought to be shared among stakeholders. But the UN cannot work alone. More needs to be done at the national level. Member States need to take responsibility for the success of SCR 1325 and ensure that it is integrated into their national policies and training programmes if there is to be real progress.

17. The widespread mainstreaming of gender into all policies and programmes at the international and national level is also a crucial factor in the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. The EU, in line with the Security Council, strongly condemns the continued acts of gender based violence in situations of armed conflict. The EU also condemns all violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed conflict and the use of sexual exploitation, violence and abuse. The EU urges the complete cessation by all parties, including UN staff, related personnel and partners, of such acts with immediate effect. The EU stresses the need to end impunity for such acts as part of a comprehensive approach to seeking peace, justice, truth and national reconciliation and to develop and fully implement codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures. Sexual and gender based violence affects not only women, but families and societies as well, and adds to the creation of a culture of violence. Promoting both the ratification and implementation of CEDAW, human rights education for boys and girls, and ending impunity for perpetrators of sexual and gender based violence, will create a safer and more sustainable environment for women's participation.
18. SCR 1325 urges Member States to produce their own national implementation strategies, ensuring the promotion of SCR1325 in domestic policies through, for example, mainstreaming gender across their government systems, and providing appropriate gender training, including to their military, police and civilian components. The implementation of SCR 1325 in domestic policies will complement action at the international level and will encourage others to develop their own national action strategies.
19. A number of EU countries are now beginning to address the need to develop their own national action plans or national level strategies. These will encourage a system-wide approach that links development, humanitarian, and defence work. Such strategies will not only ensure Member States have a coherent cross-government approach to SCR 1325 but also provide a standard against which government policies can be measured. They also provide a useful means to identify and overcome ongoing barriers to the full implementation of SCR 1325 - what we should all be aiming for.

#### Concluding Remarks

20. Implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 remains as important today as it was 5 years ago. We must do justice to SCR 1325, ensure that women are full and equal participants in peace processes and through that create sustainable peace.

21. As demonstrated so clearly today, civil society, the UN and Member States must continue to work together to ensure the full implementation of SCR 1325 at all levels. The PRST we adopt today demonstrates our commitment to the principles of SCR 1325. We must make sure we fulfil this commitment.

\* Croatia continues to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.