

*New York, 23 October 2007 – Secretary-General's remarks at Security Council debate on Women, Peace and Security: Towards a Coherent and Effective Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325*

Thank you, Mr. President, Distinguished Ministers, Distinguished members of the Council, Excellencies,

I am honoured to address the Council for the first time as Secretary-General on the vital subject of women, peace and security.

We have gathered to discuss implementation of a landmark resolution. Since it was adopted seven years ago, Member States have made significant progress.

More and more, women participate in mediating and negotiating peace, in searching for justice, in fostering reconciliation, in supporting disarmament and demobilization, and in shaping development policies and rebuilding institutions.

More and more, the Security Council ensures that peace processes empower women and advance gender equality.

More and more, UN entities work closely and actively with Governments and women's organizations, including through the UN System-wide Action Plan on implementation of resolution 1325.

But there is so much left to do – both for the United Nations and for Member States.

More countries in conflict or post-conflict need to establish their own national action plans. They need to take greater ownership of programmes and priorities in implementing resolution 1325. They need to identify the capacity building as well as the technical and financial support needed to scale up programmes for implementation. And they need to strengthen approaches to monitoring, evaluation and accountability.

For our part, we in the United Nations system must take a more evenly coordinated approach than we have done so far. We need to work better with Governments to establish truly joint programmes, driven by national priorities. We need to clarify the roles and responsibilities of UN entities at the country level. We need to work better as a team, so as to give countries access to a common entry point.

And we need to appoint more women in leadership positions in our peace operations around the world. I am delighted that Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj of Denmark has accepted to serve as my Special Representative for Liberia. She will be heading one of our biggest peacekeeping missions, and I know she will provide a shining example of the kind of qualities we need in our leaders in the field.

Excellencies,

Violence against women has reached hideous and pandemic proportions in some societies attempting to recover from conflict. Together, all of us need to strengthen our collective and individual response to it. This is essential if we are to reverse the damage done by conflict, and to build more inclusive, accountable and cohesive societies, underpinned by viable democratic institutions.

Earlier this year, I urged the Security Council to establish a mechanism dedicated to monitoring violence against women and girls, within the framework of resolution 1325. I reiterate that call today.

And I encourage Member States to actively consider proposals to strengthen the Organization's gender architecture, as presented by the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence. I believe we could significantly advance our cause by replacing several current structures with one dynamic UN entity. Such a new body should be able to call on all of the UN system's resources in the work to empower women and realize gender equality worldwide. It should mobilize forces of change at the global level, and inspire enhanced results at the country level.

Excellencies,

We all have a collective role and responsibility in accelerating the implementation of resolution 1325 -- this Council, Member States, the UN system, other international and regional actors, and civil society. On this anniversary of its adoption, let us rededicate ourselves to that mission.

Thank you very much.