

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)
"Women, Peace and Security"

FINLAND'S NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

2008 - 2011



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF FINLAND

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Foreword

The UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted in 2000, seeks to enhance women's position and role as decision-makers in crisis management activities. Finland has actively participated in the practical implementation of the Resolution in several fora, including the UN, the EU, the OSCE, and NATO's Partnership for Peace programme. However, a separate Action Plan gives added value to further the activities in a more concrete, consistent and ambitious manner.

Finland started to prepare its National Action Plan in spring 2007. A Working Group, comprising representatives from different ministries, the 1325 NGO Network, and research institutions, was set up to lead the process. The inclusive composition of the Working Group ensured that the drafting process was an open and participatory one. The preparation of the Action Plan was also coordinated with other simultaneous and parallel initiatives. The Government Reports on Security and Defence and on Human Rights Policy, both of which are currently being prepared, were also taken into account in the process. The Action Plan also supports the Government Action Plan on Gender Equality (2008–2011) and its objective to mainstream the gender perspective in all decision-making. Effectively, the process preceding the adoption of the Action Plan can be considered to have been almost as important as the actual outcome of the process, which served as a prime example of the cooperation between different actors.

The main goals of UN Resolution 1325 are to enhance women's role and power of decision with regard to conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and to promote stability in post-conflict societies by, for example, mainstreaming issues related to gender and equality into all military and civilian crisis management activities. One of the aims of the Resolution is to significantly improve women's security and to exert influence on related factors, emphasising that women and girls must not be viewed as victims but as active participants at all levels and sectors of society. The preconditions for lasting peace are better if women and men have equal opportunities of participation in the preparation and implementation of decisions. The implementation of the Resolution does not thus contribute only to women's role in society but also to stability and development in society at large.

The present Action Plan is divided into three main chapters. The first one deals with women's role and participation in conflict prevention, peace negotiations and peacebuilding. The second chapter covers crisis management training and the practical realisation of operations. The third

chapter discusses the themes of Resolution 1325 and their contribution to a better implementation of human rights.

The goals of the Action Plan are promoted at the national level, as a part of the Government Programme; at the international level, where Finland is actively involved in international organisations; and at the local level, where Finland can play a direct role in alleviating crises and conflicts and in enhancing gender awareness among local populations. The goals are pursued, inter alia, by engaging in crisis management activities, participating in development co-operation, providing humanitarian assistance and technical training, as well as through diplomacy. One or several ministries have been designated as the responsible actors in respect of each goal mentioned in the Action Plan, and they are in charge of ensuring that the goals are met through the specified measures. The Action Plan also underlines the importance of co-operation carried out with NGOs.

The Action Plan covers the years from 2008 through 2011, after which it shall be updated. A Follow-up Group will be appointed to systematically monitor the realisation and implementation of the goals of the Action Plan. The Follow-up Group will consist of representatives of different ministries, research institutions, and NGOs. The implementation of the Action Plan and the preparation and evaluation of actions will be also carried out in co-operation with actors in conflict areas, especially with women and groups of women.

We hope that this Action Plan will further increase interest in women's position and their participation in issues related to peace and security.

Helsinki, Finland

19 September 2008



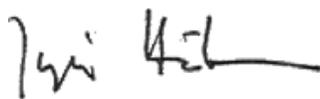
Alexander Stubb
Foreign Minister



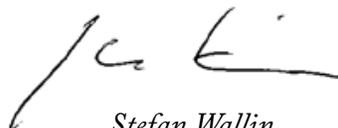
Tuija Brax
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Minister of the Interior



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Minister of Defence



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Minister



*India
Photos: Sini Peltokorpi*

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	10
Finland as an Advocate of Women’s Rights and Equality	11
Principles and Objectives of the National Action Plan	11
ACTION PLAN	14
I Conflict Prevention, Peace Negotiations and Peacebuilding	14
1. Finland will actively advocate the implementation of Resolution 1325 in conflict prevention, peace negotiation and peacebuilding contexts.	15
2. Finland will produce and publish information about women’s role and decision-making power in crisis management organisations and operations; about gender-related conflict impacts; and about gender roles in peace processes and conflict resolution.	18
3. Finland will call attention to the gender-based impacts of climate change.	19
II Crisis Management	20
1. Finland will increase the number and proportion of women in crisis management and strengthen women’s opportunities to participate in conflict resolution.	20
2. Finland will ensure that persons sent on military and civilian crisis management missions, their trainers and liable public authorities all have the information, know-how and capacity required to engage in co-operation concerning human rights and equality issues.	23
3. Military and civilian crisis management staff will have an explicit Code of Conduct and will serve as role models.	25
III Strengthening, Protecting and Safeguarding the Human Rights of Women and Girls	26
1. Finland will contribute to the strengthening of the human rights of women and girls.	26
2. Finland will participate in the fight against impunity.	27
3. Finland will strive to prevent trafficking in human beings and sexual and other violence against women, and to support victims of these crimes.	30

FOLLOW-UP OF THE ACTION PLAN **33**

INFORMATION SHEETS

Resolution 1325 as an Element of Finland's Development Policy	13
Women's Empowerment as an Element of Humanitarian action, as illustrated by the World Food Programme (WFP)	17
Crisis Management in a Nutshell	22
Human Security and Crisis Management	24
Implementation of Resolution 1325 in Humanitarian Assistance: the Democratic Republic of Congo.	29
Implementing 1325 in International Organisations: OSCE's Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings	32

ANNEX

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)	35
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INTRODUCTION

In 2000, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325 "Women, Peace and Security", which its Member States are committed to implement. In compliance with the principles and objectives enshrined in the UN Charter, the main goals of the resolution are to enhance women's role and decision-making capacities with regard to conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding, and to significantly improve factors that directly influence women's security. The chances for lasting peace, sustainable development and an effectively functioning society are better if women and men have equal opportunities to participate in the preparation, making and implementation of decisions. Programmes and reforms that incorporate an equality perspective are founded on a solid basis. Thus, the implementation of Resolution 1325 strengthens the development of the society as a whole.

Even though many UN Member States have actively supported Resolution 1325, the practical implementation of its goals remains a topical challenge. Women's opinions have not been heard sufficiently when it comes to decisions concerning the economic and power structures of post-conflict societies, land ownership or legislative issues. International research reports have, however, unquestionably shown that the promotion of women's rights and their active participation markedly contributes to the creation of a secure, equal and effectively functioning society. It is, therefore, essential that women's participation in peace processes, official peace negotiations, and high-level decision-making forums is reinforced.

Finland is strongly committed to the implementation of Resolution 1325. At the national level, the subject matter of the resolution has been incorporated into the Government Programme. A determined promotion of the goals of the resolution requires continuous and sustained planning and training as well as effective practical measures with the aim of generating more positive attitudes on gender at the international, national and local levels.

Finland as an Advocate of Women's Rights and Equality

The promotion of the rights of women and girls is one of Finland's human rights policy priorities. Finland is fully committed to implementing all international instruments related to women's rights and actively promoting women's empowerment in the EU, the UN, its specialised agencies and international conferences, and in other international organisations. Finland emphasises the indivisibility and equality of all human rights. The promotion of women's and girls' civil and political rights on the one hand, and economic, social and cultural rights on the other, is essential, as these rights are mutually complementary. Special emphasis is devoted to the most disadvantaged groups of women and girls, who often fall victim to multiple discrimination.

Principles and Objectives of the National Action Plan

The national Action Plan lays down Finland's priorities and sets the guidelines for implementing Resolution 1325. However, its implementation is not limited to the actions mentioned in the Action Plan, but can be put into practice in other ways as well. The objectives of the Action Plan are promoted by means of, inter alia, diplomacy, crisis management, development cooperation, humanitarian assistance, technical assistance, and education. The civil society plays an important role in the implementation of the Action Plan.

The Action Plan aims to contribute to the realisation of the following goals:

- Women's rights are respected, protected and implemented as a part of conflict resolution in accordance with the obligations established in international human rights conventions.
- Special attention is paid to the education of women and girls, as it is an effective means to improve women's position and to stabilise conditions in the society.

- Finland's Action Plan is based on the idea of mainstreaming the gender perspective so that gender-related impacts are taken into consideration when strategies and policies are being prepared. The different needs of women and men, girls and boys, as well as their opportunities to participate in decision-making, are incorporated in all activities.
- Women are encouraged to participate, without being subject to discrimination, in crisis management operations¹ and in the prevention and resolution of conflicts at all levels, including peace processes, official peace talks, and high-level decision-making fora, so that participation is considered the norm and not an exception.
- In a post-conflict society, women and girls are considered active members who can influence its economic and political development as well as take part in the planning and implementation of humanitarian assistance, or post-conflict disarmament and reconstruction programmes.
- Measures are taken to prevent insecurity among women and girls, violence against women and trafficking in women.
- Regular attention is paid to the promotion of sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls.
- Crisis management operations pay attention to local populations without gender discrimination. Particular attention is paid to the most vulnerable groups: children, persons with disabilities, refugees, victims of human trafficking and related phenomena, war widows and orphans as well as ethnic minorities and indigenous peoples.
- The abolition of impunity related to war crimes and grave human rights offences is an important goal and element of a just peace. This also applies specifically to crimes against women and girls.

¹ In the Action Plan, crisis management operations refer to both military and civilian crisis management tasks.

Resolution 1325 as an Element of Finland's Development Policy

Finland's development policy supports the implementation of Resolution 1325. For Finland, the rights of women and girls represent both an intrinsic value and an instrument conducive to the attainment of important goals. Equality is a cross-cutting theme in Finland's development policy, which emphasises sustainable development, stable social conditions, and the comprehensive resolution of conflicts. These same requirements apply equally to development co-operation projects undertaken by businesses and organisations using public funds. In Finland's development policy, the implementation of Resolution 1325 is also an important element of sustainable development in post-conflict societies.

Deficient adherence to human rights and democracy, and issues related to the management of natural and other resources are often contributing factors behind conflicts. Many issues related to climate change are linked to security and it is, therefore, important that the gender perspective also be taken into account when dealing with these matters. The development policy must strengthen security in the broad sense of the word, and due regard must be paid to the practical materialisation of the goals.

Finland's new Development Policy Programme from 2007 emphasises the goals of comprehensive security and the rule of law. In crisis and conflict resolution, and in the return and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons, it is important that women participate at all levels of decision-making concerning decisions that affect them directly. The majority of the victims in conflicts are civilians. Women and children are more likely to become vulnerable in conflicts, which is why their situation should be addressed accordingly.



*Peru
Photo: Marko Korkeakoski*

ACTION PLAN

I CONFLICT PREVENTION, PEACE NEGOTIATIONS AND PEACEBUILDING

International experience has proven that the participation of women in peacebuilding at all levels strengthens the likelihood of obtaining lasting peace and plays an essential role in the fulfilment of human rights. Women's broad-based participation reinforces the legitimacy of peace agreements as well as the process that leads to the conclusion of these agreements. It also enhances the prospects for obtaining the support required from civil society for the implementation phase.

For the democratic development of societies which are either going through a political or economic transition phase or recovering from a post-conflict situation, it is vital that both women and men have an equal opportunity to participate in and express their opinions on the ongoing process. This is the only way to build societies based on the principles of lasting peace and sustainable development.

Work that contributes to the promotion of human rights also helps to prevent the eruption of conflicts. Legislative reforms and the development of the judiciary must be based on the principle concerning the elimination of inequality and discrimination. The underlying idea is for emergency assistance, crisis management, peacebuilding and development co-operation to be closely interlinked, while also taken local needs into consideration.

Objective 1: Finland will actively advocate the implementation of Resolution 1325 in conflict prevention, peace nego- tiation and peacebuilding contexts

At the national level

- Resolution 1325 is a cross-cutting theme in the UN Strategy of the Foreign Service of Finland, adopted in spring 2008.

The key party responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs

At international and local levels

- As regards the UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding structures, Finland aims for a situation where both genders are equally represented and where special attention is paid to the number of women in the composition of the operation staff. Finland pursues the objective of mainstreaming Resolution 1325 into all the activities of the UN Security Council.
- Finland pays attention to the needs of women and children in the Peacebuilding Commission as well as in its own and EU-funded programmes regarding disarmament and repatriation of troops and their reintegration into society, and in post-conflict reconstruction. Also, the needs of female soldiers and their dependants must be taken into account.
- Finland underlines the active implementation of Resolution 1325 by international organisations and actively follows the progress made in gender issues in their governing boards and evaluation and research activities.
- Finland contributes to the improvement of women's position in the national political discussion and decision-making carried out in developing countries.
- Finland provides economic support and expertise, especially to local activities that contribute to the enhanced participation of women in conflict prevention, as peace brokers, and as negotiators. Finland also supports women's involvement in reconstruction work, such as in the drafting of constitutions and the formation of election and law commissions.
- Finland supports developing countries in the formulation of their own national 1325 Action Plans.

- In its humanitarian assistance, Finland stresses the need for a comprehensive approach to gender issues. The gender aspect is mainstreamed into humanitarian assistance, on the one hand, by granting men and women equal opportunities to actively participate in decision-making relating to the assistance, and to fully use the resources and services; and, on the other hand, by responding to the special needs of women and girls and men and boys respectively.
- Finland requires compliance with the principle of non-discrimination as a precondition for all reconstruction projects and supports the improvement of women's financial situation.

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice



*Kenya
Photo: Sharon McLean*

Women's Empowerment as an Element of Humanitarian action, as illustrated by the World Food Programme (WFP)

The World Food Programme WFP, the largest humanitarian agency in the world, is active in more than 80 countries. The main functions of the WFP are to provide food assistance in crises and emergencies caused by a conflict or a natural disaster.

Finland has actively contributed to the gender work of the WFP. No less than 80% of the WFP's food assistance is channelled directly to women, who in many countries bear the responsibility for providing food for the family. The WFP requires that at least half of the members of local food committees are women. When women are appointed as chairs of committees, they can effectively participate in decision-making related to emergency assistance. The distribution of food to women has strengthened respect for them and their position in society, and simultaneously guaranteed that the assistance reaches the intended destination.



*India
Photo: Sini Peltokorpi*

**Objective 2:
Finland will produce and publish information about women's role and decision-making power in crisis management organisations and operations; about gender-related conflict impacts; and about gender roles in peace processes and conflict resolution**

At the national level

- Finland supports training concerning Resolution 1325, academic and other research projects related to the theme, topical publications and other reports and evaluations especially at field level and in local communities. Finland also supports the assessment of the outcome and impacts of crisis management activities undertaken by the international community. In this work, special attention is devoted to the position and rights of the most vulnerable individuals.
- Finland emphasises the importance of co-operation between government authorities, research institutions and NGOs at all levels.
- Finland supports the accumulation and analysis of gender-disaggregated data on conflicts and violence. Finland also promotes the development and use of comparable gender-related indicators in connection with reporting concerning programmes and operations.
- Finland informs the general public about Resolution 1325 by organising seminars and training, and by issuing publications on the topic.
- Finland supports awareness-raising activities by NGOs regarding the goals of Resolution 1325.

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Ministry of Education

At the international level

- Finland advocates a more comprehensive incorporation of Resolution 1325 in the training activities carried out within the EU security and defence policy, such as courses offered by the European Security and Defence College (ESDC).
- Finland is one of the 13 member states of the European Group on Training (EGT) and, in that capacity, actively contributes to the content production of the EU's civilian crisis management training material. Finland pays close attention to ensure that the EGT takes into consideration all the goals set out in Resolution 1325.

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior

Objective 3: Finland will call attention to the gender-based impacts of climate change

At the national level

- Finland acts in favour of addressing the position of women in the discussion on climate change.
- Finland requires that the gender perspective shall be taken into consideration in development policy pursuits linked with climate change and supports measures that help to identify the gender-related impacts of climate change and which facilitate the adjustment to it. Special attention is paid to women's role in the management of natural resources, land ownership and use, and the creation of sources of livelihood.
- Finland will also draw attention to gender and climate change at the High Level International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security, which will take place in Liberia in 2009.

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Employment and the Economy, Ministry of the Environment

II CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Finland participates in international crisis management co-operation within the framework of, for example, the UN, the EU, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), the Council of Europe, and the NATO Partnership for Peace (PfP). Crisis management, in connection with conflicts today, calls for constant adjustments to the changing security situations and operational environments. It is important to adopt new forms of action to strengthen Finland's crisis management capabilities. Finland endeavours to increase women's participation in crisis management operations and in management positions.

Objective 1: Finland will increase the number and proportion of women in crisis management and strengthen women's opportunities to participate in conflict resolution

At the national level

- Finland consistently takes gender equality into account in its recruitment policy. Women must be put forward and recruited, also to managerial positions. When recruiting staff, Finland considers the diverse nature of the crisis management operations.
- In a public-service employment relationship under the Act on the Participation of Civilian Personnel in Crisis Management, the right to a maternity leave and family leaves must be taken into account; secondment to the employment of an international organisation, however, transfers operative responsibility for the employment relationship to the host organisation, to which such special terms do not apply.
- To facilitate the recruitment process, Finland will compile a list of gender experts to be appended to the crisis management register. These persons can be proposed for crisis management tasks, bearing in mind the other skills and knowledge required in order to be able to provide proper assistance in societies plagued by crisis and to engage in balanced development co-operation work. Experts who have been posted to international assignments provide reports on their activities on a regular basis.
- Organisations offering crisis management training will arrange special information campaigns for women concerning recruitment opportunities in crisis management tasks.
- The gender perspective will be further developed and incorporated into crisis management exercises. Special attention will be paid to the identification of multiple forms of discrimination.

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Justice

At international and local levels

- Finland actively advocates the inclusion of the goals presented in Resolution 1325 in the mandates of operations and missions.
- Finland emphasises the transparency of the recruitment process and ensures that, when decisions are made regarding EU or other operations, the job descriptions are gender neutral. In the reports issued following completed operations and missions, the implementation of Resolution 1325 is also assessed. In connection with crisis management tasks, it is also important to make sure that adequate personnel and operational resources are reserved to enable the follow-up and promotion of women's rights and opportunities of participation.
- Finland stresses the implementation of gender decisions that have been made in international organisations. Finland points out that operations directed by the European Security and Defence Policy (ESDP) should be carried out in compliance with the checklist of measures, adopted in June 2006, which endeavour to ensure that equality issues are addressed and mainstreamed into crisis management contexts. The same applies to the conclusions related to the promotion of gender equality and its mainstreaming in crisis management, as adopted by the EU General Affairs and External Relations Council during the Finnish Presidency of the EU.
- In EU crisis management exercises, Finland emphasises the importance of identifying and addressing the gender perspective and multiple discrimination.
- Finland promotes the election of women as UN, EU, Council of Europe and OSCE Special Representatives.
- Finland has decided to finance the two-year appointment of a gender advisor to carry out training duties in the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations.
- As a NATO PfP partner, Finland takes an active part in the work of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council in order to contribute to a more effective implementation of Resolution 1325 within NATO, in general, and especially in NATO-led crisis management operations.
- In connection with crisis management operations carried out by international organisations, Finland advocates the appointment of human rights and gender advisors as well as special observers on the status of women. Human rights and gender advisors will report both to field management and, within the framework of their regular reporting on the operation, to the management of the sending organisation.
- Finland reinforces the effectiveness of international crisis management operations by supporting their co-operation with local women's and human rights organisations. Finland provides financial support for the arrangement of joint events by international operations and local women's associations, and offers expert assistance by providing training that aims at raising interest in crisis management tasks among local women.

The key party responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Crisis Management in a Nutshell

In accordance with the Act on the Participation of Civilian Personnel in Crisis Management (1287/2004), the Ministry for Foreign Affairs decides about Finland's participation in crisis management missions and pays the participation costs out of its own budget. The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for ensuring the preparedness of civilian crisis management in Finland through the recruitment and training of experts, and for arrangements related to their insurance, travel and other employer liabilities. In practice, the Crisis Management Centre Finland and the Police College of Finland are in charge of the training and, during 2008, recruitment and employer liabilities are also to be transferred to the Crisis Management Centre Finland.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs has budgeted a total of 15 million euros for civilian crisis management in 2008. The appropriation has been designed to meet the demands of an input of one hundred man years in crisis management tasks annually. Of all the experts assigned on secondments by the Ministry of the Interior during 2004–2007, 19% were women. During the same period of time, as many as 113 persons were deployed to police duties, 15% of them being women. By way of comparison, 11.3% of all police officers serving in Finland were female.

The Act on Military Crisis Management (211/2006) states that, on the basis of a proposal made by the Government, the President of the Republic makes decisions regarding Finland's participation in military crisis management operations. After preparatory discussion on the matter in a joint meeting between the President of the Republic and the Cabinet Committee on Foreign and Security Policy, the Ministry of Defence may start to make provisions for participation. The financing has been divided between the two ministries' spending limits. The total budget is approximately 100 million euros on an annual basis. In Finland, the Defence Forces assume the practical responsibility for the military crisis management capability, including recruitment, training and the management of operations.

Objective 2: Finland will ensure that persons sent on military and civilian crisis management missions, their trainers and liable public authorities all have the information, know-how and capacity required to engage in co-operation concerning human rights and equality issues

At the national level

- In spring 2008, a Steering Group focusing on crisis management and Resolution 1325 was set up under the administration of the Ministry of the Interior. The Steering Group is expected to consider how matters related to gender equality and women's rights could be addressed more effectively in recruitment, training and research linked with crisis management. The Steering Group comprises representatives from ministries, research institutions and NGOs as well as civilian and military field experts.
- In the training of civilian and military crisis management staff, Finland emphasises the importance of equality at all levels and continues to comprehensively integrate Resolution 1325, international and humanitarian law, and human rights obligations into all its operations and missions. Furthermore, efforts will be made to increase awareness concerning operation-specific conditions, customs and codes of conduct. A national Code of Conduct must also be introduced in civilian crisis management.
- Finland arranges regular training on the content of Resolution 1325 for the management and training staff assigned to operations. The competence of the providers of this training is kept updated by means of periodic further training.
- Government authorities strengthen their co-operation with research institutions and providers of training in order to improve their own capacity to identify human trafficking, sexual exploitation and other human rights offences, and to effectively address them.

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior

At international and local levels

- The recruitment of local staff to operations must be based on the equal employment of women to gender-sensitive tasks, such as interpreters and doctors. The operation management is responsible for providing training on Resolution 1325 for locally hired staff.

The key party responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Human Security and Crisis Management

The UN Development Programme UNDP brought the concept of human security into public debate in 1994. Opposed to the traditional view, which stresses the security of states, human security focuses on each individual's security and freedom from fear and want. The concept has been subsequently developed in a variety of ways.

In the context of a project supported by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, a group led by Professor Mary Kaldor from the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE) has developed human security into a working method applicable to the EU's crisis management activities. The method could be implemented by both soldiers and civilians participating in international operations and missions.

Kaldor's model is based on six principles: (1) the primacy of human rights in all activities, (2) legitimate political authority, (3) a bottom-up approach, (4) effective multilateralism, (5) an integrated regional approach, and (6) an unambiguous and transparent strategic direction.

Issues dealt with in Resolution 1325 arise particularly with regard to the principle of the primacy of human rights, which comprises gender-specific non-discrimination in all activities and the guarantee of women's participation and opportunities for influence as a key credibility and legitimacy issue. Furthermore, the principle of a bottom-up approach highlights the goals of Resolution 1325 in that it emphasises local women's situational awareness in channelling humanitarian assistance and in conflict resolution.

The effectiveness of the model in crisis management activities has been studied in a pilot project organised by the Crisis Management Centre Finland (CMC) in Kuopio and the LSE. The objective of the training was to help the EU civilian crisis management operation in EULEX-Kosovo to address and use the principles of human security, while also taking note of the co-operation conducted by the EULEX operation with other political and military actors in the area.

Objective 3: Military and civilian crisis management staff will have an explicit Code of Conduct and will serve as role models

At the national level

- Finland ensures that gender equality and non-discrimination are incorporated into the operation- and mission-specific statutes and codes of conduct, which also include a plan of action to eradicate sexual harassment.
- Finnish military and civilian crisis management staff undertake to observe the Code of Conduct developed by Finnish public authorities. The Finnish crisis management staff is expected to actively promote equality and human rights, the guidance of victims of trafficking in human beings to seek advice from the support system, and the prevention of sexual abuse. One of the duties of the staff of operations and missions is to foster equal and equitable treatment. The staff members must respect the local culture and social norms as long as they are not in conflict with international human rights principles and agreements.
- Finland emphasises the fact that all forms of sexual exploitation are criminal acts. It is explicitly forbidden for military and civilian crisis management staff to solicit prostitutes both in the field of operation and while outside of it. Any breach of the rules will lead to immediate repatriation and investigation based on Finnish legislation.

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior

At the international level

- Finland proactively contributes to the preparation of a practice-oriented handbook based on the document concerning the mainstreaming of human rights and equality in the European Security and Defence Policy.
- Finland aims for the Code of Conduct for crisis management operations to include effective elements for promoting gender equality and preventing discrimination and exploitation.
- By participating in the work of the UN VI Committee (Legal Committee), Finland is committed to actively contributing to the preparation of a Convention on the penal responsibility of UN officials in crisis management missions and of experts that have been seconded to a crisis area, as well as to the consolidation of standards related to penal responsibility.

The key party responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs

III STRENGTHENING, PROTECTING AND SAFEGUARDING THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND GIRLS

Finland promotes the full realisation of the human rights of women and girls. International human rights norms, as such, already protect women's rights. International agreements concerning the protection of women and girls complement and strengthen the safeguards provided by general human rights conventions and represent an obligation, inter alia, to engage in special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, especially rape and other sexual exploitation. Sexual violence is used as a weapon of war that aims to weaken the unity and security of communities. Systematically committed rapes are crimes against humanity. Also, gender-based violence against civilian men and boys, such as mass murders of and sexual violence against "the combat aged", is used as a warfare method. Finland is actively working for the complete elimination of this kind of violence

Finland has systematically made efforts to promote sexual and reproductive health and rights.

One negative phenomenon of peacebuilding work is often the increase in trafficking in human beings in the area in question. Finland is committed to the prevention of human trafficking through the National Plan of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, which was published in 2005. The implementation of the Plan of Action is ongoing. Finland emphasises the human rights dimension of human trafficking, the need for broad-based assistance for the victims and the prevention of recurring victimisation.

Objective 1: Finland will contribute to the strengthening of the human rights of women and girls

At the international level

- Finland encourages all countries to ratify and fully implement the international human rights agreements concerning women's rights.

- Finland monitors the reservations made to international human rights conventions and opposes them whenever they are in conflict with the object and purpose of the agreements.
- Finland emphasises the mainstreaming of women's rights and the equality perspective into international organisations and all activities of the EU.
- Finland stresses the importance of the active implementation of UN Resolution 1612 "Children in Armed Conflict" and the EU political Guidelines on Children in Armed Conflicts, and places emphasis on addressing the special needs of girls.
- Finland emphasises the need to protect and support the defenders of women's rights whose position is often critical and vulnerable.

The key party responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Objective 2: Finland will participate in the fight against impunity

At international and local levels

- Finland ensures that women have opportunities to participate in and influence legislative reform work, and makes certain that whenever national legislative systems and legislation are amended or reformed, the impacts on women's rights and equality are evaluated.
- In the UN and in other international fora, Finland contributes to the fight against impunity and requires the prosecution of perpetrators of international crimes. Extending amnesty to perpetrators of the most serious international crimes, including torture and sexual or other violence against women and girls, is unacceptable. Finland gives financial support to NGOs that are active in the fight against impunity.
- Finland gives financial and political support to and is engaged in practical co-operation with the International Criminal Court (ICC). Finland also supports the due completion of the work of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.
- Finland continues its active participation in the Justice Rapid Response mechanism by participating in the work of the Coordinating Group and supporting the project financially. The purpose of the mechanism is to provide expert assistance to states and competent international organisations

in the identification, collection and preservation of evidence concerning war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide.

- Finland emphasises that the national legislation in countries that receive of development co-operation funds comply with international standards in respect of the criminalisation of rape.

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence, Ministry of Justice



*Afghanistan
Photo: Khalida Dunya*

Implementation of Resolution 1325 in Humanitarian Assistance: the Democratic Republic of Congo.

As a result of the long civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, the humanitarian situation in the country has been difficult for decades. The situation is particularly alarming from the point of view of women and girls, because sexual violence has become a part of the strategic warfare. The victims are generally women of all age groups and, increasingly, also young boys.

The exact number of rapes is not known, but it is estimated that in the Kivu region in the North-Eastern corner of the country as many as 14,000 rapes have taken place since 2004. The number of rapes is assumed to have risen in recent years; the fact that these activities have become a part of the daily activities of several military and rebel groups proves that trampling the rights and human dignity of women and children has become more often the norm than the exception in a civil war.

For organisations specialising in the provision of humanitarian assistance, the protection and improvement of women's rights is a key goal. As an example, FinnChurchAid is concentrating on improving the situation for women and children in the Kivu region. FinnChurchAid provides training for local organisations to help them better respond to the psycho-social rehabilitation and readjustment needs of raped women and former girl soldiers. FinnChurchAid supports local women's groups in disseminating information and providing legal advice to victims of violence, delivers judicial counselling and tries to activate inter-organisational networking and experience exchange. To women who are receiving care as a result of violence, FinnChurchAid offers instruments that facilitate their engagement in gainful employment and repatriation packages containing basic household items, which are meant to support the women's readjustment into society.

Objective 3: Finland will strive to prevent trafficking in human beings and sexual and other violence against women, and to support victims of these crimes

At the national level

- In accordance with the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, Finland is to promote the preparation of a national cross-administrative Action Plan on violence against women. The Action Plan must include concrete measures granting victims of violence appropriate care and support in compliance with the WHO's recommendations. The Government has decided to draw up a cross-administrative Action Plan as part of the implementation of its Gender Equality Programme (2008-2011).

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health

At international and local levels

- Finland actively calls attention to the significance of measures targeted at the prevention of violence against women and trafficking in human beings, and to the assistance of victims of such violence at both multilateral and bilateral levels.
- Finland shares information with other countries about best practices developed nationally in the fight against trafficking in human beings and violence against women. Finland reiterates the human rights and gender dimension of human trafficking, which means that assistance to victims must not be conditional upon the victim's consent to co-operate in any attempt to catch the perpetrators.
- Finland provides financial support to projects aimed at reducing violence against women and at the eradication of trafficking in human beings.
- Finnish prosecutors, judges, police officers and other public authorities are offered training courses focusing on violence against women as a phenomenon and as a human rights offence.
- Finland pays special attention to the position of women and girls in fragile states and post-conflict countries, and channels support to projects and programmes that reinforce women's human rights and their participation in political decision-making

- Finland supports research and development concerning protection and prevention of violence against women.
- Finland emphasises the active role men are playing in the fight against violence and, in this respect, supports the campaign, launched by the UN Secretary General, to eradicate violence against women.
- Finland has been proactive in the launching of the Council of Europe's Campaign to Combat Violence against Women and has financed the employment of a national advisor in the campaign secretariat. A national campaign is ongoing until the end of 2008.
- Finland is committed to promoting the implementation of political commitments concerning violence against women by, inter alia, supporting a seminar focusing on Central Asia during Finland's OSCE Chairmanship in 2008.

The key parties responsible for these issues: Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health



*Tanzania
Photo: Rosy Look*

Implementing 1325 in International Organisations: OSCE's Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings

The OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings was adopted in 2003. It focuses largely on measures aimed at the prevention of trafficking in human beings and the prosecution of perpetrators, but also at the assistance and protection of victims of trafficking in human beings. The Action Plan specifies tasks to be carried out by the participating States of the OSCE and the OSCE Secretariat and institutions.

Ms Eva Biaudet from Finland was elected as the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in October 2006. The Special Representative has tried to specifically highlight the vulnerable position of women and girls in connection with human trafficking. Every six months, the Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings organises a forum for the Alliance against Trafficking in Persons, where a large number of actors combating human trafficking may exchange experiences and views. The Special Representative also visits several participating States every year, meets with representatives of government, public servants, representatives of the judiciary and NGOs, calls attention to possible drawbacks, and tries to promote the implementation of the Action Plan.

The vulnerable position of women has been emphasised also in discussions between the Special Representative and NATO. The Special Representative has stressed the responsibility of the states participating in international peacekeeping operations to prevent the increase of the human trafficking phenomenon in crisis and reconstruction areas. She has further emphasised the significance of zero tolerance concerning soldiers and civilian employees who have exploited victims of human trafficking.



*Afghanistan
Photo: Khalida Dunya*

Follow-up of the Action Plan

The implementation of the Action Plan is systematically monitored.

- The national Action Plan covers the years from 2008 through 2011. During this period, the Ministries and other parties listed in the Plan shall carry out their areas of responsibility and arrange the financing required for the implementation work.
- Finland will report on the implementation of the national Action Plan to, inter alia, the Advisory Board on Human Rights. Furthermore, Finland's periodic reports on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination of Women (CEDAW) and the Government's annual development co-operation report to the Parliament will also address the implementation of the Action Plan.
- A Follow-up Group will be appointed to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the Action Plan. NGOs and the research community will also take part in the work of the Follow-up Group. The follow-up of the Action Plan will also be coordinated with other measures related to mainstreaming the gender perspective.



*Tanzania
Photo: Jeremy Firth*

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)

Women, Peace and Security

Passed on 31 October 2000

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President and recalling also the statement of its President, to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816), 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the twenty-first century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. *Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

2. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

3. *Urges* the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this

regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;

4. *Further* urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. *Expresses* its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peace-building measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. *Urges* Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

8. *Calls* on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:

(a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;

(b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9. *Calls* upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention Security Council - 5 - Press Release SC/6942 4213th Meeting (PM) 31 October 2000 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. *Calls* on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;

11. *Emphasizes* the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes including those relating to sexual violence against women and girls, and in this regard, stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;

12. *Calls* upon all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolution 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998;

13. *Encourages* all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;

14. *Reaffirms* its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. *Expresses* its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;

16. *Invites* the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peacebuilding and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council, progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;

18. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.



Photo: UHKUVA