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STATEMENT

'A 1325 Call to Action'

In the preparation of the upcoming 10th anniversary of the adoption of Security Council

Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security

25 September 2010

New York (USA)

H.E Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon

H.E Deputy Secretary General Asha Rose Migiro

Distinguished Representatives of Member States

H.E Ms Mary Robinson President of Realizing Rights and Co-chair of CSAG

Distinguished Members of the Civil Society

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure and honour for me to speak in front of this distinguished assembly and would like, first of all, to express my gratitude to the Secretary General, Member States, Friends of 1325, and Civil Society for allowing us to speak here today, 10 years after the adoption of United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. Today we have come to move beyond re-affirming our commitment to 1325 to demonstrate concrete actions to achieve a women, peace and security agenda. In this regard, I have the benefit of drawing upon my experience as the Founder and Executive Director of Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS) an NGO which works in conflict and post conflict situations in Africa to promote the leading role of women in the prevention, management and resolution of conflicts. And drawing also lessons from the work done by the many civil society organisations and women's groups working in the areas of women peace and security,

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To emphasise that although women have been suffering from the impact of war and conflict, we are not here to lament, today we are here to acknowledge that this resolution was the first of its kind to recognize women as agents of change in peace and security. As such, it has been used by women as a weapon for peace and in some places it has empowered women to build a common agenda, to get a space at the peace table and make their voices heard.

The journey of ten years has however not been without challenges. We are still far behind on achieving the three pillars of participation, protection and prevention. Liberia is an example where women participated and contributed to the Akosombo peace talks to the level of signing on the peace accord. Nevertheless, we should remain concerned about the absence of women and the lack of systematic inclusion of their concerns at the peace table. As we speak now the Darfuri women are not invited at the peace negotiation taking place in Doha.

It is tragic to see that women continue to face brutal sexual violence as it has been the case in Guinea and more recently in Eastern Congo while peace keepers are still deployed in this area. In our recent solidarity mission to Guinea, the women victims we met behind closed doors are still waiting for the perpetrators to be brought to justice and ending the cycle of impunity. As early warning indicators remain weak from a gender perspective, women's early actions are often ignored. The Mano River Women Peace Network who put pressure on their leaders to go back to negotiation instead of waging war were left behind when the talks resumed in Rabat, Morocco.

There is ample evidence that when women participate in the peace process, there is likelihood to end conflict, to save lives, to save resources and to bring lasting peace. So investing in women peace and security is the right strategy.

When UNSCR 1325 was adopted, the good intention transpired but without an accountability mechanism. The resolution did not provide for clear budget and time bound indicators. We salute the efforts made by countries in Africa which have adopted comprehensive National Action Plans on UNSCR 1325 in order to redress this situation. In Africa, Côte d'Ivoire, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea Bissau, and Rwanda have adopted National Action Plans (NAPs), Burundi, DRC and Guinea have developed NAPS to be

launched soon. As we all know, peace in Liberia will not be sustained if there is no peace in Sierra Leone and the same applies to the Great Lakes region. For this reason, Regional Action Plans which address cross boarder issues that are impeding on the stability of the region as a whole have been developed in the Mano River and the Great Lakes. Thanks to the support of Finland, Norway, UN Agencies, UN Funds, the European Union, African Union and other partners.

Despite the success stories, peace still remains fragile as we have seen in the recent events in Guinea and Eastern DRC. Today while we prepare for the commemoration of the 10th anniversary in October, there is a need to move from rhetoric to concrete action. **The commitments you make today are critical as you are making history.**

It is time to deliver the promises made to the ordinary women who have invested their life for peace and security

Women can no longer wait

It is time to nominate women as heads of mediation and peace keeping missions

It is time to provide resources for women to build their capacity, to facilitate their access to the peace table

It is time that all Member States, not only in conflict, but also in peace to adopt NAPs to ensure effective prevention and protection measures.

Lastly, it is time for the UN to adopt a mechanism which will enhance accountability that includes civil society. The work of the High Level Steering Committee with the Civil Society Advisory Group (CSAG) has demonstrated this year the importance of involving civil society at the highest level.

We remain mobilized as women's groups not only under CSAG but also in various forums to bring our resources, our experiences and our expertise to make women peace and security a reality.

THANK YOU