



# BANGLADESH

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Statement

By

**H.E. Mr. Md. Touhid Hossain**

Foreign Secretary

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

at the

Open Debate of the Security Council

on

Women, Peace and Security

New York

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Mr. President,

Let me begin by complementing the leadership of Ghana in stewarding the Council's deliberations during the current month. I would also like to thank you, Mr. President, for your initiative in organizing this open debate on Women, Peace and Security pursuant to the landmark Security Council resolution 1325. It is with some modicum of pride that I recall that Bangladesh, then as a member of the Council, was so closely associated with its adoption.

Mr. President,

Women suffer most as victims of conflict and in peace processes they are mostly deprived of the dividends. Their voices are not fully listened to, or even heard. Seven years on since 1325, we need to reflect further on how best to advance its goal. We need to analyze as to what constitutes the challenges. Also, how these can be overcome. We need to ensure adequate representation of women at all levels of decision making in conflict prevention, during hostilities and through post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation. The true measure of women's participation in peace negotiation is not, through numbers, but through power in decision making. It is undeniable that in the consolidation of peace the role of women remains vital.

Mr. President,

The Secretary General's report on women, peace and security *S/2007/567* notes some progress in the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan 2005-2007. It is our hope that the remaining shortcomings will be addressed in the updated 2008-2009 Action Plan to meet the desired goals. The overall experience, so far, in implementing 1325 at all levels of decision making has been mixed. A number of persistent constraints remain to be addressed. The challenges, particularly at the institutional and organizational levels have not been adequately addressed. There is seemingly an inadequate understanding of the gender dimensions in the conflict situations. This leads to gaps in capacity to address various provisions of 1325. This, in our view, largely impedes the implementation of 1325.

Mr. President,

Availability of gender-disaggregated data is particularly important in understanding the situation of women and girls who are victims of war and conflicts. Focused examination of issues particularly related to violence against women is also important in formulating policy guidelines. This is an exercise which would assist in undertaking preventive measures. Sharing of experience and 'good practices and lessons learned' on regular basis are useful not only in sustaining peace but also in guiding policy measures.

Mr. President,

Peacekeeping operations are no longer limited to military activities. They now have broader mandates to assist in elections, monitor human rights and carry out police functions. Multidimensional peacekeeping operations, thus have large potential in addressing the security of women. We have integrated gender perspective in some aspects of UN peace-keeping operations. However, in post-conflict peace building efforts much remain to be done. As one of the largest troop contributing countries to UN PKOs Bangladesh is ever conscious of her responsibilities to incorporate essential elements of 1325 in the pre-deployment training of peace-keepers. As member of the PBC we remain vigilant in our focus on the provisions of 1325. We recommend that all relevant UN resolutions should take note of 1325 and call for its full and effective implementation.

We also recognize that a strong Security Council mechanism is needed to monitor implementation of 1325. Establishing a working group on women, peace and security may be useful and a good option in this regard. In our view, the coordination among various UN agencies and their reporting mechanism should be enhanced in order to implement 1325 at the grassroots levels. We hope that with the updated Action Plan 2008-2009, we will succeed in overcoming the weaknesses through concerted efforts. It is our belief that integrating gender perspective across the UN system will keep in view geographical, cultural and ethnic factors. Adequate resources should also be mobilized to this effect. Active involvement of the civil society and NGOs is a sine qua non.

Mr. President,

A critical factor in successful implementation of 1325 is high level commitment in administration, and establishment of effective accountability mechanism. Without explicit commitment, the policy guidelines and its programmes and plans are all of very little use. We believe that protection of women and girls from gender-based violence and abuse is a primary and enduring responsibility. There should be zero tolerance with respect to the perpetrators. Ending impunity is a must. It is, therefore, crucial to mobilize leadership, secure accountability, pull adequate resources, identify challenges and address root causes in protecting women and girls in war as well as in peace.

I thank you Mr. President.

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