

**Security Council Open Debate on
the Implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000)
on Women, Peace and Security**

**Statement by the Under-Secretary-General
for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno**

27 October 2005

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased to be able to take this opportunity to share with you our thoughts on the progress that has been achieved, as well as the challenges that remain to the implementation of your resolution 1325, on women, peace and security, adopted five years ago.

Concrete progress has been achieved

To start with, I would like to share with you five concrete examples of how progress is being achieved by peacekeeping missions on the ground. First, we successfully integrated a gender perspective in the DDR process in Liberia, which ensured that the eligibility criteria was revised to include women who played support roles to the combatants, as cooks, porters, sex slaves or spies, and who oftentimes served as part-time combatants. Over 21,000 women were demobilized as a result and many of these women contributed important information on where arms caches were hidden. In

Burundi, 231 of the 485 disarmed female ex-combatants have been recruited into the newly restructured police force, as part of their reintegration.

Second, in the policing sector, gender advisors provide training to police personnel in restructured police forces to ensure that victims of rape and other forms of gender-based violence have access to confidential and gender-sensitive case reporting. The first specialist police unit to deal with gender-based violence crimes in peacekeeping missions was established in Timor-Leste and similar units have since been established in other missions.

Third, much work has been done to promote women's participation in transitional government institutions. In UNMIK, Kosovo, the gender unit helped introduce a minimum 33 percent quota for women into the UNMIK Regulation on Elections for the Parliamentary Assembly of Kosovo, which led to 28 percent of seats being filled by women in 2001. More recently, support of gender units in Afghanistan, DRC and Burundi has been instrumental in ensuring that newly-adopted constitutions provide guarantees for women's rights. This year, for the first time in its history, Burundi elected over 30% women to the National Parliament and to the positions of Vice-President and Speaker of the National Assembly. Many women in Burundi have also attested to the importance of having a female SRSG as a role model to spur their political aspirations.

Fourth, gender units are supporting capacity development of national counterparts in the governmental and non-governmental sectors in all mission areas. In Afghanistan, this includes capacity development of women's affairs departments in 29 provinces across the country. In Cote

d'Ivoire, the gender unit is supporting mobilization of women's groups representing political parties, trade unions and NGOs to create a common platform to promote women's participation in decision-making.

Fifth, gender units are supporting the integration of gender perspectives in the judicial and legal sector through the implementation of training activities for judges, lawyers and prosecutors in a number of missions, including Kosovo and the DRC. Furthermore, in Liberia, the gender unit is supporting national partners in their efforts to adopt a new rape law and in Timor Leste, similar support is ongoing for the adoption of a bill on domestic violence.

One must also recall, in addition to these concrete examples, some of the very significant developments of increased political participation of women in post-Taliban Afghanistan and in newly independent Timor-Leste. The new Afghan Constitution guaranteed Afghan women a minimum of 25% of the seats in the Lower House of Parliament and approximately 17% in the Upper House. In the lead-up to the Presidential elections in 2004, an inter-agency Elections Task Force chaired by the Gender Advisor was established to monitor amongst other things, the level of voter registration of women. Out of 10.5 million Afghans who registered to vote in those elections, 40 percent were women. The number of female registered voters increased to 44 percent during the Parliamentary elections in September 2005. The Constituent Assembly which wrote the Timorese constitution, became the country's first parliament and women accounted for twenty-seven percent of those elected to the Constituent Assembly, an achievement which surpassed the representation of women in many parliaments around the world. As the SRSG at the time, the late Sergio Vieira de Mello admitted subsequently, he

had himself initially been against the creation of a Gender Affairs Unit in UNTAET, as he had not realised what important impact the work of such a unit would have in helping to rebuild Timorese institutions from scratch and ensuring that the guarantee of women's equal rights was imbedded in all the new institutions of government.

Serious challenges remain, however

These developments should not however make us complacent, as the road ahead is a long and arduous one. Our most severe setback in recent years has been the damning and shameful revelation that some of our peacekeepers have been engaged in sexual exploitation of women and girls who rely on them to promote a safe environment. Beyond pointing to a series of systemic weaknesses that account for such gross misconduct, this problem should be a wake up call for all of us to attach even more importance to incorporating a gender perspective in our work. Ultimately, we will not be able to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse in peacekeeping contexts without empowering women and girls. We must also remember that gender mainstreaming is much more than the issue of sexual exploitation and abuse.

I should not have to clarify that, but, it must be noted that a significant proportion of peacekeeping personnel still do not have a conceptual understanding of what gender mainstreaming entails, nor have they grasped that it is more than just about hiring more women. This may explain in part why we have yet to institutionalize many of our gender mainstreaming strategies. Too often, it is individual commitment, rather than institutionalized mechanisms, that drives our work. We have also made

limited progress in increasing the number of female personnel in peacekeeping, particularly in uniformed functions and in senior leadership positions. The perspectives of women are still not adequately harnessed to inform our planning and operational activities. Thus whilst gender advisors hold regular consultations with women leaders and civil society organizations in peacekeeping missions, such consultations are not established practice for all mission components.

In recognition of these shortcomings, in March of this year, I issued a policy statement on gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping, which provides an operational framework at the field and headquarters level to implement resolution 1325. As part of this policy, and in line with the recommendation of the Council last year, my Department is currently finalizing a comprehensive action plan for implementation of resolution 1325, which builds on the System-wide Action Plan before you today.

The next steps for DPKO

In renewing my Department's commitment to implement Security Council Resolution 1325, I intend to vigorously address these challenges in the coming years. Our work will be focused on five main areas. First, I will emphasize more than I have done in the past that the responsibility for implementing this resolution does not fall on the shoulders of our gender advisers alone, or solely on our female staff. All men and women, particularly at senior levels, at HQ and the field, have responsibilities to implement this resolution. Second, I will ensure that all existing and future DPKO policies and guidance incorporate the relevant provisions of

resolution 1325. Third, I will underline a commitment to gender mainstreaming within all reporting and accountability mechanisms at our disposal. Fourth, I will work to ensure that we make marked progress towards increasing the numbers of women in peacekeeping. Fifth, I will review and refine the partnership frameworks that guide our collaboration with UN agencies and with Member States for implementation of this resolution.

These strategic objectives have emerged from the ongoing process to design a DPKO Action Plan for implementation of resolution 1325. Thus far, individual DPKO offices have outlined strategic objectives and actions, which will be consolidated into one Department-wide plan in the coming weeks. As a first step in ensuring senior management accountability and ownership of this process, I will shortly meet with the senior management of DPKO to review the Action Plan and to outline concrete steps to facilitate its full implementation.

Progress will depend on many others beyond DPKO

Mr. President,

My managers and I will do what we can to continue implementing this resolution. DPKO, however, is only one part of the equation. We will rely on many others as well to make a difference, starting, of course, with the parties to the conflicts themselves, as well as Member States.

There are many concrete things that Member States in this body and those contributing personnel could do to further implementation of resolution 1325. I respectfully suggest five, in particular.

First, it is necessary that Security Council members and troop contributing countries alike engage with the issue of women, peace and security on an ongoing basis, beyond just a gathering of this nature once a year. Second, the agenda of Security Council visits to peacekeeping missions should always provide for meaningful discussions with women leaders and representatives of women's organizations and this should translate into subsequent actions to strengthen the role of women in the peace process. Third, the Security Council itself could consider designing an action plan to guide its role in monitoring implementation of resolution 1325. Fourth, while recognizing that Member States have generally limited numbers of women serving in their national military and police forces, much more can be done to deploy women from countries that do have the capacity to do so. Fifth, it is vital that meaningful pre-deployment gender training is provided to uniformed peacekeeping personnel – women and men alike - to ensure that they understand how critical their contribution is to implementation of this resolution.

In short Mr. President, all Member States must take ownership for this work, just as we are trying to do in DPKO. Without this collective effort, we fail the women of the countries in which we are working and weaken the foundations for sustainable peace.

Thank you.