



**Statement
by
Ambassador Hjálmar W. Hannesson
Permanent Representative of Iceland
to the United Nations**

THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Women and Peace and Security

29 October 2003

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Mr. President,

The UN Security Council resolution 1325 lays down the ground rules for women playing a central role in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peace-building. The key issue now is implementation. We welcome the decision by the Presidency to hold this open debate to mark the resolution's third anniversary. Such debates remain necessary considering how far we are from full implementation.

By adopting the resolution the Security Council acknowledged that women have a role to play, whether it concerns conflict prevention, peace negotiations, peacekeeping or reconstruction.

The United Nations involvement in such processes and its promotion of gender equality is a key element to establish peace and security in conflict regions. The Security Council should put the same effort into ensuring the implementation of resolution 1325 as to all its other resolutions. The effectiveness of the United Nations and its international authority ultimately rests on the extent to which it is seen to implement its own decisions.

Iceland has consistently supported gender equality and the advancement of women. Security Council Resolution 1325 is an important element of the UN agenda in this field.

The Icelandic Government has for the past three years been financing the post of a gender expert at the UNIFEM office in Kosovo, where UNIFEM has been playing an important role in advancing gender equality. The Icelandic Government stresses the importance of hiring both men and women for the Icelandic Peacekeeping Unit (Iceland Crisis Response Unit).

We welcome the appointment of an interim Gender Adviser to the Department for Peacekeeping Operations. We hope that the permanent position of a Senior Gender Advisor will be filled shortly. Staff working directly on gender issues must be included in all peacekeeping operations and be afforded effective authority to ensure compliance at all levels. We also encourage the Secretary-General, as a matter of

priority, to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys as called for in Security Council resolution 1325.

Mr. President,

Iceland was the 10th State to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The entry into force of the Statute and the establishment of the Court represent a major breakthrough for the protection of human rights, including those of women. It recognizes, *inter alia*, the specific impact of armed conflict on women by criminalizing sexual and gender violence, and puts an end to impunity through ensuring effective investigation and prosecution of these crimes by the Court. It also addresses another very important subject matter which is reflected in resolution 1325. By being the most gender balanced bench of all international judicial institutions, the ICC provides an excellent example of how to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels.

Thank you, Mr. President.