



Statement

by

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The Security Council

**Open debate on
Resolution 1325 (2000)
Women, peace and security**

28 October 2004

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,

Iceland, as a member of the European Economic Area (the EEA), aligned itself with the statement made earlier by my colleague from the Netherlands on behalf the European Union, but in addition I would like to make a few remarks.

My delegation welcomes this opportunity as a non-Council Member to address the Security Council in an open meeting on Resolution 1325: Women, peace and security on the fourth anniversary of the adoption of the resolution.

Mr. President

At the outset my Government would like to express its gratitude to the Secretary General for his report on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in document S/2004/814.

Resolution 1325 has proven to be an important milestone for the direct involvement of women in conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peace-building. It is now finally acknowledged that women have an important role to play in the establishment and maintenance of peace and security in conflict regions. The implementation of Resolution 1325 requires the same strong efforts as the implementation of any other Security Council resolution.

Since the adoption of the resolution the United Nations, Member States and other entities have taken important steps to implement the resolution. The report points out nonetheless that major gaps and challenges still remain in all areas, including, in particular, in relation to women's participation in conflict prevention and peace processes. The international community must continue its work with the full force and commitment of all stakeholders and make it a top priority to fully implement the resolution.

Mr. President

It holds true that armed conflict has a severe impact and widespread repercussions on people and their society in general. Women and girls become especially vulnerable as the infrastructure disintegrates during the period of conflict and the security network within their society breaks down. Under such circumstances protection of women and girls against gender-based violence is of utmost importance. It is regrettable, to say the least, that the international community has thus far not been able to prevent acts of violence against women from occurring during armed conflict and that still today we receive stark and disturbing evidence of gender-based violence in countries such as Afghanistan, the DRC and the Sudan. Our only option is to aim at preventing gender-based violence and to make our strongest efforts to pursue our goals in that regard. Early warning mechanisms have a crucial role to play in responding to gender-based violence and to prevent it from reoccurring. Such

monitoring efforts must then be complimented by practical measures to end impunity and to bring those who are responsible to justice.

My Government concurs with the findings of the report of the Secretary-General regarding the important role that the international tribunals for Rwanda and Yugoslavia have played in the jurisprudence on sexual violence under international law. The Rome Statue of the International Criminal Court recognizes the specific impact of armed conflict on women by criminalizing gender-based violence. Even though the international community has set up these mechanisms to react to the horrific repercussions of armed conflict, the responsibility of States where armed conflict occurs still cannot be avoided – they carry the primary responsibility to bring perpetrators to justice.

Mr. President

My Government finds it deeply disturbing that alleged sexual exploitation and sexual abuse committed by UN personnel has been reported, and we agree with the Secretary-General that such behaviour is absolutely unacceptable. The UN and its Member States must do its utmost to root out any signs of such violence.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like to mention the support the Icelandic Government has given to the implementation of 1325. Since 2000, the Icelandic Government has had a gender expert working at the UNIFEM office in Kosovo and this summer extended her term until February 2005. UNIFEM in Kosovo has been playing an important role in advancing gender equality by assisting local women in developing an action plan for gender equality in Kosovo and by providing various courses for municipalities and professionals to enhance gender equality. Furthermore, the Icelandic Government supported UNIFEM's National Committee in Iceland in organising a conference on Women, War and Security with Elisabeth Rehn, former Minister for Defence of Finland, as key-note speaker and by financing a report on gender mainstreaming in the Icelandic Crisis Respond Unit/Peacekeeping Unit.

I thank you, Mr. President.