



The Permanent Mission of Iceland to the United Nations

**Statement by
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Permanent Representative**

**Security Council – Open debate
Women and peace and security**

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The recognition by the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) ten years ago of gender equality as a security issue was a watershed, both for women and our organization. Through the unanimous adoption of resolution 1325, the Council acknowledged not only the needs and concerns of women in connection with peace processes, but underlined the participation of women as an important prerequisite for sustainable peace.

A decade later, the record reflects some positive developments. However, if truth be told, progress has been slow – and ultimately disappointing.

Only a handful of countries have adopted National Action Plans to implement resolution 1325. In the meantime, armed conflicts still devastate the lives of women and girls in many parts of the world. Women are often subjected to terrifying gender-based, sexual violence, which most of the time goes unpunished. Women are also regularly marginalised in peace-making. This is hardly a satisfactory state of affairs. Therefore, we must now focus on action, implementation and accountability, so that ten years from now we can look back with a sense of achievement and say that we have made a difference.

Advancing the aims and working towards the strengthening of resolution 1325 is a high priority of Iceland. All Icelandic diplomatic missions are required to support the aims of Resolution 1325 in their work. Iceland is, for example, working actively to advance resolution 1325 within NATO and the OSCE, in addition to our work at the United Nations.

There is a vital need for a system of monitoring the status of implementation of 1325. Therefore, Iceland urges the Security Council to adopt the indicators put forward in the Secretary General's report so that UN organizations, member states and civil society are able to measure the impact on the ground and men and women around the world to reap the benefit.

At the same time, UN Women should play an important role in overseeing the monitoring and implementation of the indicators, as well other issues related to resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions. Allow me to reiterate my government's commitment to supporting UN Women and to congratulate the new Under-Secretary-General, Michelle Bachelet, on her recent appointment. Iceland also welcomes the appointment of Margot Wallström as the first Special Representative of the Secretary General to fight the spread of sexual violence in conflict. We stand ready to support the Special Representative in her important work

Iceland's National Action Plan has been in place for almost three years. Preparations are under way to revise the plan for adoption next year. This will

be done through a participatory, transparent process involving political leaders at the highest level, all relevant government agencies and civil society. The plan will contain specific goals, clear indicators and a transparent monitoring mechanism. It will also take fully into account pertinent Security Council resolutions on Women, Peace and Security.

My government has also undertaken projects to highlight, strengthen and implement resolution 1325. Particular effort has been focused on women's empowerment. The Gender Equality Training Programme is an international training programme, run in cooperation with the University of Iceland, with the explicit purpose of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment through education and training. It is our hope that the programme, now in its second year, with fellows from Afghanistan and Palestine, will in due course be recognised as an official United Nations University Programme, making it the fourth such programme located in Iceland.

In addition, Iceland has advocated women's participation in peace negotiations, including through the important work of the International Women's Commission (IWC) bringing together Israeli, Palestinian and international women dedicated to seeing an end to the Israeli occupation and a just peace based on international law, human rights and equality.

Lastly, Iceland has emphasised the importance of the gender perspective in international climate talks, confident that the increased participation of women will help the international community foster a more sustainable response to the scourge of climate change.

Ten years on, it is time for the international community to get serious about implementation. While often depicted, and rightly so, as victims of armed conflict, it is important to bear in mind that women are more often than not an integral part of the solution. Let's make the coming decade a decade that counts, a time when we no longer tolerate impunity for crimes, a time when women's needs and rights are respected and both women and men are equal partners in forging a lasting peace.