



IRELAND

STATEMENT

BY

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ON BEHALF OF
THE HUMAN SECURITY NETWORK



AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE
ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

New York, 29 October 2008

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Mr President,

Ireland welcomes this opportunity to address the Security Council on the issue of women, peace and security. I have the honour to speak today on behalf of the Human Security Network, a cross-regional group of countries comprised of Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, with South Africa as an observer. I would like to express my appreciation to you, and to China, for convening this open debate and facilitating discussion of the international community's response to Resolution 1325.

Eight years after the adoption of Resolution 1325, we warmly welcomed the adoption by the Council earlier this year of Resolution 1820, which a number of Human Security Network members were pleased to co-sponsor. The horror of gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, has repeatedly been brought to the attention of the Security Council and demands an urgent and effective response from the international community. In recognition of this, Ireland has chosen to focus on gender-based violence as the main theme of our term as Chair of the Human Security Network, a position we will hold until May 2009.

Resolution 1820 builds on the foundations laid by Resolution 1325 in emphasising our collective responsibility to work to combat sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. The Security Council reiterated its deep concern that acts of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict QUOTE continue to occur, and in some situations have become systematic and widespread, reaching appalling levels of brutality UNQUOTE.

Recognising the ongoing and urgent need for full and effective implementation of Resolution 1325, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his useful report on this topic. The report is encouraging in that it records significant progress towards implementation of Resolution 1325. Nevertheless, it also highlights the extent of the work yet to be done in this area, and emphasises the need for the international community to redouble its efforts to promote full and meaningful implementation of the Resolution. Action is also required to ensure delivery of the UN system-wide Action Plan on implementation of Resolution 1325, as previously highlighted by Slovenia, on behalf of the HSN, in a statement at the Security Council in October 2006.

Implementation of Resolution 1325 is not a matter solely for the Security Council, or for the UN system; all member states must take responsibility for the implementation of the resolution through their own national activities. The development of National Action Plans is a key means by which member states commit themselves to fulfilling this responsibility. Only through such a process can countries assess activities already carried out in this area and commit themselves to tackle outstanding issues identified.

In a national capacity, Ireland is currently developing our own National Action Plan, and we intend the process to be guided by the experiences of women and men in countries emerging from conflict. To this end, we hope to work in partnership with Liberia and with Timor-Leste in a process of cross-learning. While we recognise the need for diverse approaches in different contexts, we hope this collaboration will result in a concerted effort in all three countries to effect real, immediate and

meaningful change for women who have experienced conflict, and who can and should be stakeholders in State building and peacebuilding.

Mr President,

The continued prevalence of gender-based violence in conflict is a cause of great concern to the Human Security Network and is a grave violation of all accepted standards of conduct and a challenge to our common humanity. The international community must act, in accordance with Resolutions 1325 and 1820, both to eliminate instances of such violations and to ensure that victims have full and meaningful access to justice and that impunity for the perpetrators of such crimes is combated.

We recall that the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court specifically defines rape and other forms of sexual violence as war crimes and crimes against humanity. The Human Security Network urges the Security Council to work together with relevant stakeholders to ensure the prosecution of such crimes and to eliminate the impunity with which they are perpetrated.

We stress the need for the exclusion of sexual violence crimes from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes as part of a comprehensive approach to seeking sustainable peace, justice, truth, and national reconciliation.

Women are highly active and effective in informal peace processes. The challenge lies in ensuring their participation in formal processes where peace agreements are

negotiated. The members of the Human Security Network are committed to supporting meaningful steps to promote and enhance the role of women in peace processes, and to integrate gender equality more effectively in peace processes. Such measures will strengthen the legitimacy of decision-making processes which is so vital to the creation of durable foundations for peace and prosperity.

Mr President,

Resolution 1325 was born of the recognition of the particular impact of war on women and that this heinous impact required special attention and action on the part of the international community. As is highlighted regularly in frequent reports provided to this Council and also in the media, that need continues. It will take increasingly vigorous and relevant action to mitigate and eliminate the consequences of war on women. To be successful, this process must facilitate the leadership role of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding without detracting from the shared responsibility for results that rests on us all, irrespective of gender.

In this context, on behalf of the Human Security Network and on behalf of Ireland in our national capacity, I commend the Council's continuing attention to this urgent and vital task.