

NEW ZEALAND MISSION to the UNITED NATIONS



Te Māngai o Aotearoa

ONE UNITED NATIONS PLAZA 25TH FLOOR NEW YORK, NY 10017-3515, USA
TELEPHONE (212) 826 1960 FACSIMILE (212) 758 0827 HOMEPAGE: www.nzmissionny.org

UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL

“WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY”

**STATEMENT BY THE NEW ZEALAND PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
AMBASSADOR DON MACKAY**

THURSDAY 28 OCTOBER 2004

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr President,

We commend the initiative of the UK Presidency to focus today's discussions specifically on gender based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. Resolution 1325 is broad in scope and we think it is valuable to take the time this year to deal with this particular issue in depth. We are also pleased to note that the theme of today's debate parallels the current thematic focus in the NGO community on violence against women – including the recent studies on violence against women in conflict situations by Amnesty International. We think this coordination is an excellent idea.

Mr President,

As we have heard from so many speakers already today, violence against women in conflict situations is reaching epidemic proportions. With mounting horror we have watched the humanitarian and human rights crisis in numerous and appalling conflict situations. Women and girls in situations of armed conflict are being executed, tortured and displaced from their homes. We note with particular concern that violence against women and girls continues to be used as a weapon of war.

Mr President

The issue before the Security Council today is how the United Nations and Member States are addressing this issue. We welcome the comments presented by today's panellists on the challenges of implementing Resolution 1325. While I think we all acknowledge that the UN and Member States still have a long way to go in implementing 1325, it is encouraging that we are able to have an open discussion on how to meet these challenges.

New Zealand sees several priorities to address the violence against women and girls in armed conflict.

For the UN system:

- (1) **we support those calling for a new system-wide action plan for the coordinated implementation of Resolution 1325.** As part of this we note that increasing representation of women in all levels of UN operations and decision-making must be an important part of the UN's efforts;
- (2) **we continue to urge the Security Council to include a systematic and express focus on the gender dimensions of conflict in every case that comes before it.** We note the idea was floated last year of naming a Security Council member to be responsible for tracking implementation of the resolution – including ensuring the necessary resources are made available - and hope this idea will be considered seriously by the Council;

(3) on the specific question of peacekeeping, **there is an urgent need to inject a clear gender perspective into all facets of UN peacekeeping operations**, including through training of peacekeepers, composition of the Missions and standards of conduct as well as strict monitoring and accountability processes in the event of breaches of conduct. We note that ensuring these elements requires adequate resourcing by the Security Council and Member States. There is also a strong responsibility on Member States to ensure UN peacekeeping recruitment includes women at all levels;

For the wider UN membership

(4) if we, the UN and Member States are committed to women's peace and security in times of conflict and post conflict, **we must ensure that the focus is not solely on women as victims but give recognition to their roles as peacemakers and active participants in resolving conflict** and building peace at all levels;

(5) **impunity for gender-based violence cannot be accepted** and the **international legal framework in place to address gender-based violence in armed conflict must be respected**. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which specifically defines rape and other forms of violence against women as war crimes and crimes against humanity is important in this regard;

(6) we hope that the United Nations can **start to address the difficult issues surrounding protection**. The devastating aftermath of violence against women and girls is clearly apparent in many countries but this has yet to translate into decisive, collective action to prevent such situations from happening again. There is scope over the coming months for the Security Council and General Assembly to be dynamic in its approach to prevention and protection issues. We hope good progress can be made.

Thank you Mr President