

**Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
Tuesday, 26th October 2010, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)**

Statement by Hilary Rodham Clinton, Secretary of State of the United States to the United Nations

Thank you very much, First Deputy Prime Minister, and I want to thank you and the Government of Uganda in its role as Council President for convening this important meeting on the occasion of the 10th anniversary. This gives member states, as well as NGOs, an invaluable opportunity to reflect on what we have achieved over the past decade, but more importantly, to look very honestly at what remains to be done to fulfill the promise we made to women a decade ago. We promised that women would be treated as agents of peace and reconciliation, not just as victims of war and violence. I would like to thank Secretary General Ban for his leadership. He has defined a vision for women's empowerment and protection that is guiding this organization, and he is helping to build the institutions that can advance our collective mission.

And we are very fortunate to have with us today the UN Under-Secretary-General Michelle Bachelet, the first head of UN Women. I am delighted by her appointment and very grateful for her commitment and the excellent presentation that she has already delivered. I also want to recognize Special Representative of the Secretary General Wallstrom, who is working very hard and needs the support of all of us to implement Resolution 1888 concerning sexual and gender violence. These women are both dedicated advocates for women's rights and participation. And I also want to thank Under Secretary General Le Roy, whose Department of Peacekeeping Operations has taken groundbreaking steps to implement Resolution 1325. Thank you for increasing protection measures for vulnerable women and children and for integrating gender advisors into all missions.

And finally, I would like to honor our colleagues in civil society, many of whom are on the frontlines – literally on the battle lines – in the fight for gender equality in conflict zones around the world. Thanks in particular to Bineta Diop and Mary Robinson, co-chairs of the UN Civil Society Advisory Group for Women, Peace and Security, who have been tireless advocates for peace and for women's inclusion.

So here we are at the 10th anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and we're here to reaffirm the goals set forth in this historic resolution, but more than that, to put forth specific actions, as my colleague, the foreign minister of Austria, just did in such a commendable set of proposals. The only way to achieve our goals – to reduce the number of conflicts around the world, to eliminate rape as a weapon of war, to combat the culture of impunity for sexual violence, to build sustainable peace – is to draw on the full contributions of both women and men in every aspect of peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peace building.

Now, women's participation in these activities is not a “nice thing to do.” It's not as though we are doing a favor for ourselves and them by including women in the work of peace. This is a necessary global security imperative. Including women in the work of peace advances our national security interests, promotes political stability, economic growth, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Just as in the economic sphere, we cannot exclude the talents of half the population, neither when it comes to matters of life and death can we afford to ignore, marginalize, and dismiss the very direct contributions that women can and have made. President Obama's National Security Strategy recognizes that “countries are more peaceful and prosperous when women are accorded full and equal rights and opportunity. When those rights and opportunities are denied, countries lag behind.” Well, it is also true when it comes to issues of human security – accountability for sexual violence, trafficking of women and girls, and all of the other characteristics of stable, thriving societies that provide maternal and child healthcare, education, and so much else.

Now, in defense, diplomacy, and development, which we consider the three pillars of our foreign policy, we are putting women front and center, not merely as beneficiaries of our efforts but as agents of peace, reconciliation, economic growth, and stability.

In Afghanistan, for example, our diplomatic efforts have been rooted in the notion that respect for the rights of women, as protected in the Afghan constitution, is an essential element of democracy and stability. The United States has backed women's inclusion at all levels, including in the recently formed High Peace Council, because we believe the potential for sustainable peace will be subverted if women are silenced or marginalized. Our military has also begun to play an active role. In Namibia, for example, the U.S. military helped train nearly

600 peacekeepers on women's issues who were then deployed to Chad. This type of military-to-military engagement helps ensure that soldiers understand their obligation to protect women and girls in conflict areas and receive the training to know how to do that.

From Nepal to Guatemala to Uganda, our development agency, USAID, is promoting women's roles in politics, supporting their participation in local peace committees, and helping develop plans to implement 1325. In fact, in the future, every USAID project to prevent or manage conflict will study its effect on women and will include them in the planning and implementation.

But the United States and none of the member states can do this work alone. We need the international community. We certainly need organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross, which trains women to treat landmine victims in Afghanistan, and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, which works with men and boys to promote support for women's rights, and the UN itself, which is building up new capacities to combat sexual violence. These and other partners are absolutely essential to fulfilling the promise of 1325.

There is no starker reminder of the work still ahead of us than the horrific mass rapes in Democratic Republic of Congo last summer. Those rapes and our failure as an international community to bring that conflict to an end and to protect women and children in the process stands as a tragic rebuke to our efforts thus far. And we all must do more and we must think creatively. And yes, we may have to challenge some conventional wisdom about how best to end the impunity of those who not only conduct these horrible violations of human rights, but those who permit them to do so.

While visiting Goma last year, I pledged \$17 million to help prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence. This money is now flowing to provide medical and legal services for survivors. In addition, the U.S. military's Africa Command has trained a battalion of Congolese soldiers to work to prevent sexual violence, help victims and prosecute perpetrators. We know that that is still not happening, and we know that, unfortunately, there is not yet the will, either in DRC itself or in the UN or in the international community, to help bring about an end to impunity.

Looking ahead, I am pleased to announce two important steps the U.S. is taking to advance the goals of Resolution 1325. First, the United States will commit nearly \$44 million to a set of initiatives designed to empower women. The largest portion, about 17 million, will support civil society groups that focus on women in Afghanistan. The women in Afghanistan are rightly worried that in the very legitimate search for peace their rights will be sacrificed. And I have personally stated, and I state again here in the Security Council, none of us can permit that to happen. No peace that sacrifices women's rights is a peace we can afford to support. Fourteen million dollars will also go to nongovernmental organizations working to make clean water more available in conflict zones, because in these areas, when women and girls go looking for water they are at higher risk of being attacked. Similarly, I had the honor of announcing the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves last month – another initiative that by our support can protect women who will not have to go out seeking firewood or other forms of fuel if we can revolutionize the way they're able to cook food for their families. Another 1.7 million will help fund UN activities, including Special Representative Wallstrom's office, and 11 million will help expand literacy, job training, and maternal health services for refugee women and girls.

In addition to this new funding, our second step will be to develop our own National Action Plan to accelerate the implementation of Resolution 1325 across our government and with our partners in civil society. And to measure progress on our plan, we will adopt the indicators laid out in the Secretary General's report. We will measure whether women are effectively represented in the full range of peace-building and reconstruction efforts; whether they are protected against sexual violence; and whether they are the focus of conflict prevention, relief and reconciliation efforts. Measuring our progress will help ourselves be held accountable and identify those areas where we need to do more.

Now, the National Action Plan and the new funding I've announced are two important steps, and we will pursue them with total commitment. But as several have already said: Action plans and funding are only steps toward a larger goal.

The presidential statement that we hope will be adopted calls for another stock-taking in five years. But we

better have more to report and we better have accomplished more between now and then, otherwise, there will be those who will lose faith in our international capacity to respond to such an overwhelming need – because, ultimately, we measure our progress by the improvements in the daily lives of people around the world. That must be our cause and empowering women to contribute all their talents to this cause is our calling. And I thank the member states and the NGOs and others represented here for joining us in this mission. Thank you, Mr. President.