



Women, Peace and Security:

Iceland's Plan of Action for the Implementation
of United Nations Security Council Resolution

1325 (2000)



MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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Icelandic peacekeeper in Afghanistan
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Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iceland, with Olubanke King-Akerela, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Liberia, and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberia.

Empowering Women for Peace

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security is a promise to women around the world that their rights will be protected and hindrances removed in order to guarantee their full participation in peace negotiations and peacebuilding. Implementing the resolution's objectives and goals is a demanding task for the nations of the world.

It is crucial that women participate more actively in peace processes. The stakes are high when the future of an entire society is discussed, and it is vital that women sit at the negotiation table. The presence of women has proven vital when it comes to peace negotiations and peacebuilding in the wake of conflict. There are numerous examples of women using the Resolution as a means to promote peace.

The Liberian women of WIPNET (Women in Peacebuilding Programme) are living proof of the Resolution's vitality as a tool to promote change. During my stay in Liberia last summer, I met some remarkable women. These women participated directly in the process that galvanized positive changes in Liberia. They joined hands and now work actively on the reconstruction of their society after a long period of conflict.

In addition, the Palestinian and the Israeli women of the IWC (International Women's Commission for a Just and Sustainable Palestinian-Israeli Peace) have been engaged in the promotion of peace for decades. These women managed to do what men have been unable to; they addressed the main contentious issues in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and were able to reach a consensus on nearly all of them. This proves that ways to settle disputes can be found.

Resolution 1325 has a broad international dimension, and women around the world



UN photo

The United Nations Security Council in session.

have embraced it and harnessed its power. Women in Sri Lanka, the Balkans, the Middle East, Africa, South-East Asia, Latin America, and the Caribbean, to name a few, have lobbied for women's participation in peace processes and peacebuilding on the grounds of Resolution 1325. Women's presence at the negotiation table in Northern-Ireland, before the establishment of the Northern Ireland Assembly, is believed to have been vital.

The Government of Iceland now funds research on women's access to peace negotiations in conflict areas, and how such access can be facilitated. The research is conducted by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), a leading African institution.

I have repeatedly discussed the fading division between foreign and domestic affairs. The implementation of Resolution 1325 is an example of this. Iceland's Plan of Action for its implementation underlines the importance of increasing women's participation in decision making and peace processes. Experience has shown that women are more likely to consider women's points of view and make an effort to protect women and girls in conflict zones. I hope this Action Plan will prove useful for empowering women for peace.

The foundations of Icelandic Foreign Policy are human rights, development cooperation and the peaceful resolution of conflict. Iceland has made contributions to the promotion of women's rights in international fora. My objective is that Iceland's special status and strength in the area of gender equality will become more visible. I have already spoken out in support of Resolution 1325 within the United Nations and NATO. Be assured that I will continue to act in order to ensure that women's voices will be heard around the world.

Ingibjörg Sólrún Gísladóttir, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Introduction

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security was a milestone in the history of the Council. It was the first time the Security Council acknowledged the special position of women during conflict and post-conflict, and the importance of women's contributions to peace. It calls for a significant change in the process, evaluation, traditions and attitudes of individuals, institutions and UN member States.

The resolution emphasizes that women can both influence situations of armed conflict and be significantly impacted by them. The resolution stresses the importance of women's participation in the peaceful resolution of conflict and peacebuilding. It also underlines women's equal participation in all actions that maintain and promote peace and security.

The resolution encourages UN member States to take all suitable measures necessary to incorporate women's views and experiences into actions towards peace.

The main focuses of resolution 1325:

- Increased women's participation in decision making and peace processes.
- Protection of women and girls in conflict zones.
- Integration of gender perspectives and gender education into peacekeeping.

Inter-governmental cooperation is essential to better implement the resolution within international peace and security organisations. In the last years a few States have set forth Plans of Action on the implementation of the resolution in their work at the international level. Three Nordic countries, the United Kingdom and Canada have led the way within an informal Group called the Friends of 1325. The Group lobbies on behalf of the resolution within the United Nations.

As more States implement the resolution and use it as a reference in their work, the value of human security becomes stronger in the international fora. This leads to better prevention for armed conflict, more cohesive peacekeeping operations and broader respect for human rights.

Iceland prepared its Plan of Action for the implementation of resolution 1325 by consulting with civil society, academic institutions and its Nordic partners. The consultations were important for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and gave the Plan of Action broader support.

The Plan of Action is built on the main pillars of Iceland's foreign policy; respect for human rights; increased development cooperation and peaceful resolution of conflict. Special emphasis is put on women's access at the negotiating table.

The Plan of Action shall be revised and updated three years after its release, following consultations with civil society and academic experts. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs shall publish results of such revisions and updates every three years.

Women, Peace and Security:

Iceland's Plan of Action for the Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000)

1. Gender perspectives will be integrated into all projects, operations, policy making and legislation regarding peace, security and development issues.
 - The viewpoint and experience of women will be integrated into the development, execution and evaluation of projects in all fields of peace, security and development. This will apply both to the work of the Icelandic Foreign Service as well as Iceland's work within international organizations.
 - A special check list will be developed for peacekeepers to facilitate their application of the resolution in the field.
2. The Icelandic government will advocate for the implementation of the resolution in the work and policy of relevant international organizations, in cooperation with other States.
 - The Icelandic government will continue to work as a steadfast advocate of the resolution in the international arena; monitor the implementation of the resolution by relevant parties and bring attention to cases of non-compliance.
3. The Icelandic government will work to enable more women to assume positions of responsibility in the field of peace and security.
 - More women: i) will fill positions as officials in international organizations; ii) will become heads of peacekeeping operations; iii) will be international peacekeepers; iv) will be locally employed during peacekeeping operations.

The action plan in action

An Icelandic woman recently became head of the Council of Europe Office in Kosovo. She will be deployed there on behalf of the Iceland Crisis Response Unit (ICRU). Efforts are already underway to allocate Icelandic women more management positions within international organisations.



Girls playing in Palestine, where an Icelandic peacekeeper is deployed.

4. Gender perspectives and the clauses of resolution 1325 will be considered in the selection, execution and evaluation of peacekeeping missions that Iceland takes part in.
 - The Icelandic government is committed to securing women's access to post conflict reconstruction at the earliest stage.
5. Women and men will be offered equal opportunities to participate in peacekeeping operations for the Iceland Crisis Response Unit with the intention of having the gender ratio as close to equal as possible among posted peacekeepers.
 - The Icelandic government will emphasize civilian peacekeeping efforts and the mission selection of the ICRU will take into consideration the suitability of positions for candidates of both genders.

The action plan in action

Icelandic women are deployed with UNIFEM in the Balkans and Liberia on behalf of the ICRU. Among the UNIFEM projects in the Balkans is the implementation of a regional plan on the implementation of resolution 1325. Icelandic women also work on development issues in cooperation with international organizations engaged in Afghan reconstruction on behalf of the ICRU.



Liberian women protest gender-based violence.

6. The Iceland Crisis Response Unit puts emphasis on giving local populations of both genders the opportunity to work and be educated in the safest environment possible.
 - Peacekeeping operations that Iceland participates in should support the increased participation of women in their societies and post-conflict reconstruction.
 - The importance of working towards increasing the economic independence and security of women will be prioritized.
7. Employees of the Icelandic Foreign Service will be briefed on gender issues, equal rights and resolution 1325. In addition, all deployed peacekeepers will be educated on gender and equal rights perspectives and the special situation of women in conflict zones in accordance with the resolution.
 - Icelandic peacekeepers have for the past years received briefings on gender, equal right, sexual abuse and HIV/AIDS with a focus on conflict zones, in accordance with the resolution. The briefings have been conducted in cooperation with the national committee of UNIFEM in Iceland.
8. Sexual abuse and gender based violence by deployed peacekeepers or other posted personnel is not tolerated



A Liberian mother with her children.

- It is prohibited for peacekeepers to buy sexual services or have sexual relations with anyone who is dependent on the peacekeeping force. Peacekeepers shall never sexually harass members of the local population, colleagues or others.
- In article 12 of the code of conduct of the ICRU it is stipulated that peacekeepers can be withdrawn from their post, without notice, if the peacekeeper has violated the code of conduct. In addition Icelandic criminal laws apply to all deployed peacekeeping personnel according to the law on the ICRU and its participation in international peacekeeping (Icelandic civil code 73/2007).

9. The Icelandic government will strive to support projects that are in accordance with the resolution.

- The Icelandic government will allocate appropriate financial support to institutions and to funds that execute projects related to the resolution.

The action plan in action

During the past two years UNIFEM in the Balkans has been working in accordance with the resolution. Special peace teams of women in the area have been formed and an awareness campaign on women, peace and security has been launched. Icelandic peacekeepers, involved in the project, work on implementing the resolution.



An Icelandic peacekeeper at work in Afghanistan.

10. Knowledge and research in the field of peace and security with a focus on resolution 1325 should be strengthened.

- A growing community of international relations academics in Iceland is a resource for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and it is important that the issue of women, peace and security is considered. The Icelandic government will support the research and publication of educational material on women, peace and security.
- The Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Institute of International Affairs at the University of Iceland have engaged in cooperation in the field of education and research in international relations.

The action plan in action

The Icelandic government currently funds research on the access of women to peace processes in conflict zones and how such access could be facilitated. The research is conducted by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) which is a leading African human security research institution.

United Nations



Security Council

**Adopted by the Security Council at its
4213th meeting, on 31 October 2000**

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President, and *recalling also* the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace (International Women's Day) of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian

and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. *Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;
2. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decisionmaking levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;
3. *Urges* the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;
4. Further urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. Expresses its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;
6. Requests the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment, and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;
7. Urges Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;
8. Calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:
 - (a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;
 - (b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;
 - (c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;
9. Calls upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. Calls on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;
11. Emphasizes the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;
12. Calls upon all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;
13. Encourages all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;
14. Reaffirms its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;
15. Expresses its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;
16. Invites the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peacebuilding and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;
17. Requests the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;
18. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.