

NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security¹

Cora True-Frost, Coordinator

777 UN Plaza, 8th Floor, New York, NY 10017 Tel. +1 (212) 682-3633, ext. 3121 Fax +1 (212) 682-5354
<http://www.peacewomen.org/un/ngo/wg.html>

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Dear Ambassador,

The Security Council will hold an open debate on implementation of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security on October 28 2004. This year's open debate will focus specifically on the pressing issue of gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security urges you to make a statement to this open debate in support of implementation of Resolution 1325 at national, regional and international levels.

In making your statement to the open debate, we hope that in addition to describing how your government has implemented Resolution 1325 at the national level, you will also consider:

- Calling on the Security Council to request the Secretary-General to establish a UN system-wide action plan by October 2005 for the coordinated implementation of Resolution 1325. Progress on the implementation of such a system-wide action plan should be included in the Secretary-General's annual reports to the Security Council.
- Calling for annual reporting by the Secretary-General on the implementation of and elaborating further actions needed for the implementation of Resolution 1325. The Security Council could start this process by calling for a report by the Secretary-General on gender-based violence in October 2005, in follow-up to this year's open debate.
- Calling on the Security Council to establish a focal point and an expert level working group to ensure integration of Resolution 1325 in the Security Council's work.
- Calling for the Secretary-General to appoint an independent group of experts to audit the resources currently available within the UN for work towards implementation of Resolution 1325 and to evaluate where reallocation of these and/or further resources, including personnel, are required.
- If your government has not already done so, committing to developing a national action plan for coordinated implementation of Resolution 1325. Such an action plan should be public, drawn up in consultation with civil society, and contain specific and time-bound activities, targets, and monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

¹ The NGO Working Group currently consists of Hague Appeal for Peace, International Alert, International Women's Tribune Center (IWTC), Women's Action for New Directions (WAND), Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children (WCRWC), Women's Division of the United Methodist Church, Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), and Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF). Amnesty International is an affiliate member of the NGOWG and associates itself with this statement.

The NGO Working Group pushed for the adoption of Resolution 1325 in 2000. Since the unanimous adoption of Resolution 1325, we have partnered with other civil society organizations in advocating for its full and rapid implementation. Preceding this year's open debate, the NGO Working Group will release its report, "Four Years On: Progress Check on the Implementation of Resolution 1325."² The report synthesizes the contributions of forty four civil society organizations and networks from over twenty countries and makes five core recommendations on how to further the implementation of Resolution 1325.

As the Secretary-General recently stated "gender-based violence has reached almost epidemic proportions". Since the adoption of Resolution 1325 we have seen horrific levels of gender-based violence in conflicts around the world, including in Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia and Afghanistan. Gender-based violence, as well as being a direct threat to women's lives and a heinous violation of their human rights, is also a key obstacle to women's participation in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, peace-making, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction. The NGO Working Group applauds the United Kingdom's focus on the issue of gender-based violence at the forthcoming open debate. The NGO Working Group also welcomes the participation of a civil society representative at the open debate on October 28.

We are confident that the above mentioned recommendations, if acted upon, would do much to ensure accelerated implementation of Resolution 1325. Should you wish to discuss this matter with us, please do not hesitate to contact our office at the address given above. Thank you for your consideration and your concern about this issue.

Yours Truly,

Cora True-Frost, Coordinator
The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security

² This NGOWG report will be and other 1325 resources are available on our website, www.peacewomen.org Amnesty International is an affiliate member of the NGOWG and is not a co-author of this report.