

SWEDEN



STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Olof Skoog
Permanent Representative of Sweden to the United Nations

at the

Security Council
under the agenda item
“Women, peace and security”

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Mr President,

At the outset, let me thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN Women for their briefings this morning. I would also like to, in particular, thank Ms Lusenge, Ms Mohammed, and Ms Murabit for their participation here today. The bravery and commitment of women's organisations in preventing conflict, building peace and promoting human rights, often in dangerous conditions, is admirable and deserves no less than our full support.

We are here today not only to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of the ground-breaking UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, but also to support and promote women as actors for peace. It is high time we accelerate our common efforts and move from normative commitments to full implementation.

Mr President,

Enhancing gender equality and the contribution of women to peace and security are top priorities for the Swedish government. Promoting gender equality, not only means promoting economic, political and social empowerment of women – it also means promoting development and conflict prevention.

Let me highlight three areas of particular importance to us and where Sweden wants to pledge continued support.

Firstly, indisputable evidence, as highlighted by the Global Study, has shown that women's participation lead to more sustainable peace. Yet, women's experience, knowledge and expertise are too often excluded in peace processes.

Change needs to start at home. My government has committed to strengthen human rights of women, improve women's access to resources and increase women's representation – in times of war, and in times of peace.

We will make women's participation in peace and security a top priority in our revised National Action Plan. In order to make sure that the new plan duly reflects the needs and experiences of women and girls in conflict-affected societies, we have held consultations in five conflict and post-conflict countries. All women – from Afghanistan to eastern DRC – have conveyed the same message: "No sustainable peace can be achieved without us".

We will hear their plea, and commit to continue to support and fund women's organizations in conflict and post-conflict countries. We have increased this support threefold over the last five years, but we will strive to do even more.

Sweden is also developing a network of women peace mediators, as well as partaking in the creation of a Nordic women's mediation network, which within two years will have a capacity to assist peace efforts wherever needed in the world.

Secondly, we need to acknowledge that sexual violence in conflict is a core security challenge that must be kept on the agenda of the Security Council. Particularly now, as the use of sexual violence has been taken to new horrific levels, where sexual violence is not only condoned, but openly commanded as a method of warfare. There must be accountability for these crimes and an end to impunity.

As a main donor to *UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict*, we will seek further ways of increasing support to victims and survivors of sexual violence. We will also continue to cooperate with relevant stakeholders, such as the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, to create stronger national capacities to investigate and prosecute sexual and gender-based crimes.

In 2016, Sweden will assume the leadership of the *Call to Action on Protection from Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies* initiative which aims to foster accountability and mitigate gender-based violence in humanitarian crisis. Our main objective for next year will be to take this initiative from policy to action, from words to deeds. We want to work with all partners in this initiative – and all of you – to make a real positive impact in the way we address gender-based violence in humanitarian crises.

Furthermore, Sweden will support organizations working to engage men and boys in the pursuit of gender equality. Recent good practice from conflict-affected countries show the importance of engaging men and boys to prevent violence from happening in the first place.

Thirdly, the lack of, or uneven distribution of resources is often at the core of inequality. We need a thorough analysis of how resources are allocated and to whom. To achieve real change, political commitment needs to be accompanied by sustainable financing.

Sweden is committed to allocating 1 percent of its GDI to development cooperation. Gender equality and women's rights and empowerment will remain top priorities in our development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. In 2014, 16 percent of our development support to conflict affected countries had gender equality as a primary focus. We challenge the UN to reach its set target of 15 percent gender-funding within all aid flows to conflict-affected countries.

Mr President,

We welcome the resolution adopted today by the Council, and its call on the UN to redouble efforts to integrate women's needs and gender perspectives. By strengthening gender competence and accountability – on strategic, tactical and operational level – the UN will be better fit to cater to the needs of women and men, boys and girls.

Sweden is committed to supporting those efforts, and will continue to offer pre-deployment training in UNSCR 1325 and gender for Peacekeeping mission staff, as well as seconding gender advisors to international institutions and missions. Sweden also remains committed to a strong and adequately resourced UN Women, being its top donor in 2014 with a total support of 35 million USD.

In concluding, sustainable development, peace and security can never be achieved if half the population is excluded. In order to take our common commitment seriously, we need to make sure that women's voices are being heard, and that the needs and realities of women living in conflict and post-conflict countries influence our decisions.

Thank you.