



Kingdom of Spain

**High-Level review of SC Resolution 1325 (2005): from rhetoric to effective results**  
**Open Debate of the Security Council**  
**October 13th 2015**

*The Open Debate will be chaired by the Prime Minister of Spain*  
**H.E. Mariano Rajoy**

**H.E. Ban Ki-moon**, United Nations Secretary-General, will deliver a statement at the beginning of the Open Debate

*Briefers:*

**Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka**, UN Women Executive Director

**Ms. Julienne Lusenge**, Director of Fonds pour les Femmes Congolaises (FFC) and President of the Administration Board of Sofepadi

**Ms. Yanar Mohammed**, President of the Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq

*\*Interventions should be specifically concise and focused on action/commitments which are to be announced during the Open Debate.*

*Please refer to pages 4 and 5 of the Concept Note*

15 years ago, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 (2000), drawing attention to the differential impact of armed conflict on women and girls, their exclusion from conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peacebuilding, and the inextricable links between gender equality and international peace and security. This thematic resolution was adopted following a decade of peacekeeping failures in Rwanda, Somalia and the former Yugoslavia. It was the result of the active mobilization of women's groups globally after the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and the strong determination of some Security Council members serving at that time.

Significant changes have happened in the world since 2000. In less than a decade, the number of major violent conflicts has almost tripled.<sup>1</sup> The nature of conflict has also changed:<sup>2</sup> cycles of fragility and insecurity have become entrenched in many regions; the interconnections between natural disasters, humanitarian crises and conflicts are more visible; the number of refugees and internally displaced persons is higher than ever before in the UN's history, and many of these will remain displaced for almost two decades, the average length currently of displacement. All of this is also affected by new and emerging threats, the most prominent of

<sup>1</sup> Report of the SG "The future of United Nations Peace Operations: implementation of the recommendations of the HIPPO" (A/70/357, para 2)

<sup>2</sup> Both the reports of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, and the Advisory Group of Experts on the 2015 Peacebuilding Architecture refer to the changing face of global conflict. The growing threat posed by violent extremism and terrorism adds another layer to the already complex global and regional conflict scenario (para 8, 12, 79 HIPPO and para 10, 11, 14, 19 and 53 of Peacebuilding report)

which is the rise of violent extremism and terrorism, perhaps the greatest threat to global peace and security at present.

Since 2000, we have also witnessed institutionally various positive developments, such as the creation of UN-Women, and the Special Representatives of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and for Children and Armed Conflict. The Security Council and UN's own responses have also shifted over this period. Perhaps most significantly, the gradual consideration of violations of human rights and humanitarian law as being a threat to international peace and security has created new spaces for the Council to engage across the main pillars of the UN activity.

With regards to women, peace and security specifically, six resolutions have followed resolution 1325 (2000). Together, these seven resolutions elevate the importance of women's participation and leadership in all aspects of peace and security, recognize sexual violence in conflict as a threat to international security and an impediment to peacebuilding, and create obligations for UN actors and member States to both empower and protect women and girls in conflict-affected contexts.

This is a decisive year for the United Nations' efforts on both gender equality and peace and security. We have just celebrated the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and have recently launched a new development agenda for the coming 15 years. In addition to the current review of the emblematic UN Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) through this open debate and a Global Study on its implementation, we have reviewed the UN's peace operations and peacebuilding architecture. The convergence of these three processes provides an invaluable opportunity to develop a holistic approach to conflict prevention, peace making and peace building by, inter alia, ensuring women's participation and leadership across all areas and stages of response<sup>3</sup>. These reviews will be also complemented by the outcome of the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit, and by the plan of action that the Secretary General will introduce in the next weeks, with practical measures to prevent violent extremism. The High-Level Review on implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and the Global Study which will inform it, provides an invaluable opportunity to reflect on the current status of the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda, and to make concrete and ambitious commitments to its full realization.

### **Diagnosis:**

In conducting a brief overview of the women, peace and security agenda since it was taken up by the Security Council as a separate thematic issue in 2000, we could come to the following general conclusions:

a) The Security Council has established a relatively robust normative framework on women peace and security.<sup>4</sup> There remains though an implementation gap at headquarters<sup>5</sup> and, above all, on the ground. In practice, women's protection and participation is not prioritized, it is often

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<sup>3</sup> As the SG has stated, "advancing the cause of women, peace and security must be integral to our peacemaking, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding efforts, not an afterthought" (October 2010)

<sup>4</sup> Following the adoption of 1325, the SC didn't adopt any WPS resolution until 2008. Between 2008 and 2010 the Council had an extraordinary level of normative activity in this field with resolutions 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960. In 2013 it adopted other two new resolutions: 2106 and 2122.

<sup>5</sup> . In this regard, the gains that have been made on the conflict-related sexual violence agenda since the creation of the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary- General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and the strengthened implementation architecture both in the field and with the advent of the Team of Experts on Rule of Law/Sexual Violence in Conflict, represents a critical advance.

seen as an add-on and non-political component, instead of as a critical aspect of the peace and security equation for both women and men, and for society as a whole.

b)The most challenging gap that remains concerns the participation of women in peace processes and post-conflict political transitions, even as empirical evidence reveals a strong connection between the inclusion of women in peace processes and more durable and stable peace. Participation issues should be systematically tackled together with the protection issues and recognized as mutually-reinforcing. We can affirm that the Security Council has rarely acted to proactively prevent conflict<sup>6</sup>. Investing in participation has a strong impact on prevention.

c) Even if the normative framework created by the Security Council since 2000 is broad, there are areas that resolution 1325 and subsequent women, peace and security resolutions have not addressed directly, including emerging threats such as the role of women in countering violent extremism and countering terrorism<sup>7</sup>. While the use of rape, sexual slavery and forced marriage and other forms of sexual violence have been identified as part of the strategic objectives, ideology and funding of extremist groups such as ISIS/Daesh in parts of Syria and Iraq and Boko Haram in Nigeria<sup>8</sup>, the analysis of the role of women as victims of a broad range of rights violations at the hands of extremists, and equally their role as perpetrators, agents of prevention and response, as well as of affected populations of both terrorism and counter-terrorism strategies remains inadequately addressed. As such, the women, peace and security agenda has not been integrated adequately in the response of the international community to this threat.

d)The failure to allocate sufficient resources, a lack of political will, accountability, available expertise, and persistent attitudes of resistance by gatekeepers and decision makers are among the main reasons why this agenda has not been effectively implemented since the adoption of resolution 1325.

### **Main actors of the women, peace and security agenda**

Although the women, peace and security agenda stems from the Security Council, it projects its impact towards the whole membership of the United Nations, the UN system and civil society. The Security Council should strengthen its role in being accountable for its own decision on women, peace and security, but regional organizations, the whole UN System and, above all, member States have also their own responsibility in addressing the challenges faced by this agenda. **Addressing these challenges is the main goal of this open debate.**

While the Security Council established the normative foundations for this agenda, it is not an implementing arm of the UN system and cannot be expected to achieve the required outcomes in isolation or without quality information and analysis. Implementation also requires significant commitment and action by the broader UN system, member States and civil society.

The UN system as a whole, and in particular its operational departments of DPA and DPKO, OCHA, UN Women as the lead on women, peace and security, should improve their general performance on this agenda by, among other measures, providing analytical and strategic information to the Security Council on the situation on the ground, and by further engaging with

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<sup>6</sup> Importance of prevention in general terms is also underlined in the SG's annual report on women and peace and security S/2015/716 (paras 66 and following ones). "At a rhetorical level, there is strong support for early warning and conflict prevention. But this is not always translated into early action" (A/70/357, para 34)

<sup>7</sup> There are few references to the integration of a gender perspective in countering violent extremism and terrorism. The SC made a commitment to integrate WPS into other thematic issues, such as counter-terrorism, in resolution 2122. There are also some vague references in resolution 2129, in resolution 2178 (with the rise of groups like ISIS and Boko Haram), resolution 2195 (on the role of transnational organized crime in supporting terrorism) and 2199 (on illicit funding sources for ISIS and Al-Nusra Front).

<sup>8</sup> Secretary General's 2015 report on conflict-related sexual violence S/2015/203 (2015), para 83

local civil society, including women's organizations. Strengthened collaboration and synergies between peace operations and UN Country Teams are needed, so as to maximize comparative advantages of each. Stronger determination from the UN senior leadership -at headquarters and on the ground- is required to effectively deliver on women, peace and security responsibilities.

The Security Council must also strengthen its own commitment to the effective implementation of the WPS agenda. The Council should review its working methods towards the women, peace and security issue in order to enhance its performance in this field.

Member States have the primary responsibility to ensure that global commitments and obligations on women, peace and security are integrated into domestic policies and laws. They remain the most influential actors in the implementation of resolution 1325 as members of the UN and regional organizations but also in their role as parties to the conflict, as donors, as troop and police contributors to peacekeeping or as political player in a specific conflict or region. In this regard, it should be underlined that cases of sexual exploitation and abuse endanger the image, legitimacy and effectiveness of the UN presence on the field. The SG has outlined some specific and strong measures to further implement the UN's Zero Tolerance Policy<sup>9</sup>, but better follow-up and investigation also requires member States cooperation, particularly that of troop-contributing countries.

Regional organizations have also a crucial role to play in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. Since the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) there have been important efforts by regional and sub-regional organizations for monitoring progress, evaluating results and sharing good practices on the implementation of the WPS agenda.

Last, but not least, civil society has been a key-actor from the outset of the agenda. They are partners, beneficiaries and key actors of the agenda, and more effective ways to systematically engage with civil society organizations at a local level and to empower women's organizations must be found to bridge the gap between international policies and local realities.

### **Challenges and goals of the high-level review**

Among the key challenges of the women, peace and security agenda are the lack of consistent implementation<sup>10</sup>, lack of accountability, and adequate gender-related resources and financing. This open debate and high-level review brings us an extraordinary opportunity to show that the UN and its member States can promote the cultural shift that this agenda is demanding on the occasion of its 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Implementation requires real commitment by national leaders<sup>11</sup>, but also by the leadership of the UN and regional organizations. It also demands strong determination and support from the financial perspective, at the international, national and local levels.

### **Therefore, we encourage:**

-Member States to go beyond the rhetoric by announcing precise, ambitious and time-bound national commitments on the occasion of the high-level review on relevant areas such as women's leadership and participation in decision-making, the development and implementation

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<sup>9</sup> SG report of 2014 on Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse, paras 258-269 of the HIPPO report, paras 118-124 del informe del SG A/70/357

<sup>10</sup> Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (para 239)

<sup>11</sup> The Report of the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations underlines the "lack of national leadership in making this agenda a political and governance national priority" the main impediment to the implementation of the WPS agenda (para 239)

of National Action Plans, funding allocations, security and rule of law sectors, countering violent extremism and terrorism, and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction, among others.

- Member States who have gone or are going through peace processes to share their good practices and achievements related to the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. Their case studies would be useful for other countries.

-The UN system to announce specific, ambitious and time-bound commitments in areas such as accountability and reporting; gender architecture, expertise and resourcing; women's participation; protection, conflict-related sexual violence and sexual exploitation and abuse, among others, so as to demonstrate that the Secretariat and the whole UN effectively prioritize this agenda.

-Regional organizations to share information on their own WPS architecture; on the communication channels established with civil society; on their ways to monitor and report on the progress in the implementation of this agenda; and on how they envisage a closer cooperation between regional organizations and the UN.

-The Security Council should also consider how it can improve its performance on a daily basis; not only through a more coherent and systematic approach to its thematic agenda items (women, peace and security, protection of civilians, sexual violence in conflict, children and armed conflict or countering terrorism), but also through its country-specific ones, since solutions should be tailored according to the specific contexts.

#### **Participation, briefers and outcome**

The open debate will be chaired by His Excellency Mariano Rajoy, Prime Minister of Spain. His Excellency Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations Secretary General, is expected to attend and intervene at the beginning of the debate. The Executive Director of UN-Women, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, will present the conclusions of the 2015 SG's report on women, peace and security. Ms. Yanar Mohammed (Iraq) and Ms. Julienne Lusenge (DRC) will brief on behalf of the civil society.

We encourage all the participants to deliver concise but strong and focused statements (no longer than 3 minutes), so that everybody can contribute to and interact in the review of this emblematic resolution. Longer statements can be sent in advance to the following address: [highlevelreviewwps@unwomen.org](mailto:highlevelreviewwps@unwomen.org). They will be published at the UN-Women web-page, together with this concept note.

An outcome of this high-level review is expected.