



PERMANENT MISSION OF FINLAND TO THE UNITED NATIONS
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United Nations
High-Level Side Event "A 1325 Call to Action"

Statement by
H.E. Ms. Elisabeth Rehn
Minister of State of Finland

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(Check against delivery)

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me congratulate the Group of Friends, the Secretary-General and the Civil Society Advisory Group on women, peace and security for convening this meeting under the title "Call to Action" and for their inspiring words.

Ten years after the landmark resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security was adopted it is truly a time to move from promises and plans to action and accountability.

In that spirit Finland commits to action in three areas which we believe are vital for achieving the goals of 1325: National Action Plans, support to civil society, and fight against impunity with due attention to victims.

First, Finland commits to reviewing its current National Action Plan on 1325 and will, during the next year, prepare an updated National Action Plan in close cooperation with its civil society partners.

Results of the significant work on 1325 indicators in the UN and the EU will be integrated to the Plan, as well as the goals and tools of resolutions 1820, 1888 and 1889 and the EU's comprehensive approach to women, peace and security.

Finland currently supports creation of a National Action Plan in Kenya through a twinning project. Based on experiences from the project, Finland will stand ready for a possible new twinning with an interested partner. Finland will also prepare to assist in the follow-up to the implementation of the Kenyan National Action Plan.

Second, Finland will stress the key role civil society has in promoting and implementing 1325. Finland commits to cooperating closely with NGOs nationally, and internationally, for example through our continued support to Femmes Africa Solidarite in its work in preparing and implementing National and Regional Action Plans. Processes that lead to Regional Action Plans are a particularly interesting and effective way to implement the ultimate goals of 1325 – the prevention of conflicts and sustenance of peace – since they bring together "old enemies"; women and men from both (or all) sides to a conflict.

Cooperation with civil society is vital also regarding Finland's commitment to increase its contributions to peace mediation and promote the effective participation of women at all stages and levels of formal and informal peace negotiations. Finland emphasises the importance of nominating women in top-level functions in international organisations and operations, including as peace mediators, and commits to increasingly nominate and support female candidates to these positions.

Thirdly, Finland will continue its efforts to end impunity for the most serious human rights violations, including sexual and gender based violence. This should always be done with attention to the victims. Finland commits to continued support to the efforts of the International Criminal Court, including its financial support to the Trust Fund for Victims, whose board of directors I chair.

In this regard, I would like to draw your attention once more to the issue of amnesties: not only are amnesties for the most serious human rights violations contrary to international law, amnesties also undermine possibilities for sustainable peace as they disregard the dignity of the victims. There should never be amnesties for the most serious crimes.

Furthermore, Finland will systematically pay attention to the incorporation of aspects deriving from resolution 1325 into the mandates, political guidance and operational tasking of international peace operations, and will increasingly offer gender and human rights experts to international peace operations and missions. In order to broaden the effects of implementation, gender training to men in peace-operations will also be ensured.

Finland will further develop implementation of 1325 as a part of its comprehensive approach to promoting peace. Regarding development cooperation Finland has already commissioned an evaluation-report on implementation of 1325 as a cross-cutting theme. Finland's approach is exemplified in its cooperation with Afghanistan, where 1325 is implemented through contributions to civilian and military peace operations, as well as through development cooperation, such as the significant financial support to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission.

I welcome the commitments database launched today as an innovative tool to keep account of our promises and real actions. I will be sure to have Finland's commitments registered in it, invite everybody to make their own commitments and encourage the civil society – and all of us – to keep us all accountable for delivering on our promises.