

SWEDEN



STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Anders Lidén
Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations

**Open debate in the Security Council on
Women and Peace and Security**

**United Nations
New York**

23 October 2007

- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Mr. President,

The adoption of Security Council resolution 1325, seven years ago, underlined the importance of ensuring that the goal of gender justice and gender equality permeate the work of the international community in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, reconstruction and peace-building processes. Due to the nature of modern armed conflicts, civilian population and women are often particularly affected. Women must be involved in resolving the armed conflicts affecting them, their families and their communities. Women should take part in the creation and implementation of peace agreements, and they must be able to participate equally in the political decision-making process. Efforts such as security system reform should also have a gender and human security perspective.

We urge the Secretary General, the Security Council and all Member States to contribute to the effective implementation of 1325, including by increasing the number of women in senior positions at field level.

Mr. President,

Last year, Sweden launched a national plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325. The approach of the Swedish Government to Resolution 1325 is based on a holistic view of security, development and human rights. Agencies, ministries and governmental offices are working together to achieve the goals of the Resolution. As an active member of the UN and the EU, Sweden has an obvious interest in and responsibility for, the full implementation of Resolution 1325, in United Nations peace support activities, as well as in the European Union's external relations. The EU's contribution to the implementation of Resolution 1325 enhances the Union's effectiveness and credibility as an actor in crisis management. The EU Handbook on gender for planning and conduct of operations as well as the fairly new feature of gender advisers in EU missions are some concrete measures.

The UN system has made considerable efforts at implementing Resolution 1325. However, more needs to be done both in the field and at headquarters. Concerted and concrete efforts by the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Support Office are called for. We are also looking forward to new initiatives coming from the Security Council, including a request for a special report on the situation of women and girls as victims in armed conflicts.

Mr. President,

We believe that the UN system needs to redouble its efforts to counter violence against women in conflict. It is also important to underline that such violence rarely stops once the conflict is over. In some cases violence against women even increases. The efforts to stop this kind of violence must not end with a peace-agreement or even after democratic elections have taken place. The transition period should be an opportunity to strengthen the rule of law. And the law must protect women. For this to happen, women must also be guaranteed full access to justice. This very matter will be the focus of a discussion today organised by the Partners for Gender Justice, co-chaired by South Africa and Sweden.

During last years open debate on Security Council Resolution 1325, Sweden underlined that we all have a responsibility to provide ideas, initiatives and good practices, and that we should not only ask for reports and proposals from others. The focus of the Partners for Gender Justice initiative has been on empowering women to participate in, and gain improved access

to, the justice sector. This work is an important element of implementing Security Council Resolution 1325. Sweden calls on other Member States and the UN to carry it forward by initiating concrete programmes in the area of women and justice.

More attention should also be paid to the pressing issue of effectively incorporating women into demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration measures. Experiences from Sierra Leone and Liberia show that women who are former combatants or have been associated with fighting forces face more difficulties to be accepted back into their communities than men.

Mr. President,

I will finish my statement by once again underlining that we all have a common responsibility to contribute to the experience-sharing that is needed for the further implementation of SCR 1325. Sweden attaches great importance to taking into account gender perspectives in all areas of work nationally and internationally. It is my hope that this debate will be a catalyst for further efforts in the struggle to recognise and act on the legitimate demands of women for full equality, justice and opportunity, not only in armed conflicts, but in life itself.

Thank you