

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

(Australian Section)



Final Report:

Developing a National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325

'What would a world in which the principles enshrined in 1325 look like? When peace works for women, it provides a crucial component for creating sustainable peace and development locally and globally'.¹



Final Report compiled by **Prof Elisabeth Porter**, University of South Australia, with assistance from **Ruth Russell**, Joint National Coordinator, WILPF (Australian Section). (The final views expressed are not necessarily Prof Porter's or WILPF's, but a summary of the consultations).

¹ NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, 2005, *From Local to Global. Making Peace Work for Women Security Council Resolution 1325 – Five Years On Report*, New York: NGO Working Groups on Women, Peace and Security, ix.

Discussion Paper compiled by **Di Zetlin**, School of Political Science and International Studies, University of Queensland, with assistance from Rachel Litster.

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Di Zetlin teaches in the School of Political Science and International Studies at the University of Queensland, specialising in Peace and Conflict Studies and Gender Studies. She wrote the Discussion Paper and was ably assisted by Rachel Litster, who was awarded a Dean's Summer Scholarship to work on this project.

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Professor Porter teaches Politics and International Studies at the University of South Australia. She prepared materials for the national consultations which she facilitated. In collating data from the consultations for this final report, she was ably assisted by Ruth Russell.

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Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Australian Section)

Consultative Status with United Nations ECOSOC, UNCTAD and UNESCO

Special Consultative Relations with FAO, ILO and UNICEF

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom's involvement with UNSCR 1325

As part of the international program, WILPF joined with many women's non-government organisations to work together with member states to bring the issue of *women, peace and security* to the United Nations Security Council. On 24 and 25 October 2000 (The International Year of the Culture for Peace) the UN Security Council discussed the impact of war on women and girls and passed the Resolution 1325 on 'Women, Peace and Security'.

In 2004, WILPF (Australian Section) received funding from the Australian Government Office for Women to develop an Australian website promoting UN Security Council Resolution 1325. See www.1325australia.org.au. In preparation for the UN Committee on the Status of Women meeting for 2004, the Australian Government asked WILPF (Australian Section) to put forward their ideas for an Australian National Action Plan (NAP) to implement this Resolution. The ideas contained therein may merit further consideration when an Australian NAP is being developed.

In 2008, WILPF (Australian Section) in partnership with UNIFEM (which had earlier run *Inform Sessions* promoting UNSCR 1325 in several capital cities) put forward a proposal to Minister Tanya Plibersek through the WomenSpeak Secretariat that the development of an Australian UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan be considered in the top ten priorities for Australian women. This proposal was later accepted by the other three Secretariats for inclusion in the top ten women's priorities for action.

This current project includes a Discussion Paper and findings from national consultations to inform the Australian government on the next possible steps for a National Action Plan for UNSCR 1325.

We thank all the participants and WILPF members who have contributed to this project with their time, ideas and organisational skills. We especially thank the two consultants, Di Zetlin and Prof Lis Porter for their expertise, commitment and input into these Reports.

Ruth Russell and Lyn Lane: Joint National Coordinators, WILPF (Australian Section)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Project Aim

The outcome of the research and NGO consultations will be practical information, advice and ideas that will inform the Australian Government's thinking about the next possible steps for a National Action Plan UNSCR 1325.

Project Outline

This Project was designed around three key actions:

1. **A Discussion Paper: Developing a National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325.** Di Zetlin, University of Queensland, was commissioned to provide research and analysis on the first 8 UNSCR 1325 NAPs developed. Copies were distributed widely to participants and organisations to assist them when participating in the national consultations. The Discussion Paper is available on the WILPF Australian website. A copy of the Discussion Paper is attached as part of this Final Report (Appendix 3).

2. **National Consultations in every capital city**

WILPF commissioned Professor Elisabeth Porter, who currently teaches Politics and International Studies at the University of South Australia to facilitate the consultations. She is author of four books and co-editor of three books. Her most recent book is *Peacebuilding. Women in International Perspective* (Routledge: 2008).² Professor Porter prepared the consultation materials, facilitated all the national consultations and wrote the National Consultation Summary of Findings from transcribed data compiled by Ruth Russell.

3. **Executive Summary**

This Summary provides a brief overview of the whole project and the key findings for further consideration by the Office for Women.

Introduction

To date, 14 countries have developed a UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan according to their unique situation and capacity while four countries have incorporated UNSCR 1325 into their mainstream internal policies. The latter is not the preferred option for the bulk of participants.

DISCUSSION PAPER

² The book *Peacebuilding* is available at: www.routledgepaperbacksdirect.com/books/politics.

The Discussion Paper highlights some of the differences in approach and content adopted in the first 8 National Action Plans developed which will provide useful information when considering the development of an Australian National Action Plan.³

Key research findings from the Discussion Paper

- The full text of UNSCR 1325 can be found in the Discussion Paper (pp.6-8).
- The development of an Australian UNSCR 1325 National Action Plan would seem to be congruent with the First National Security Statement to the Australian Parliament by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd along with the desire for Australia to 'become a creative middle power' (p.9).
- UNSCR 1325 enjoys a measure of bipartisan support (p.10).
- AusAID has developed related peace and gender guidelines.⁴
- Adapting the INSTRAW guidelines,⁵ the advantages of a National Action Plan are: whole-of-government comprehensiveness, coordination, awareness-raising, participatory ownership and accountability.
- An *Extract from the Agreed Conclusions of the UN - Commission on the Status of Women 2004*, on women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding is included in our project's *Discussion Paper* (pp.40-42) and could provide the international framework when developing an Australian NAP.
- UNSCR 1325 is relevant to Australia because of our specific involvement in Afghanistan, Iraq, Timor Leste, Solomon Islands, Philippines and Fiji, as well as our ongoing influence in the Asia-Pacific region.

³ See WILPF Discussion Paper, compiled by Di Zetlin.

⁴ AusAID, 2006, *Gender Guidelines: Peacebuilding*, Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

⁵ United Nations INSTRAW, 2006, *Securing Equality, Engendering Peace: A guide to policy and planning on women, peace and security*, Santo Domingo: INSTRAW, 5.

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

Invitation to participate

Following the release of the UNSCR 1325 Discussion Paper, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) cordially invited interested individuals and organisations to attend a national consultation meeting in their capital city or provide written feedback on the material presented in the Discussion Paper, for collation in a Final Report to the Australian Government.

National Consultations in every capital city

- Adelaide 20th May 2009
- Brisbane 27th May 2009
- Canberra 28th May 2009
- Sydney 29th May 2009
- Darwin 1st June 2009
- Perth 2nd June 2009
- Melbourne 3rd June 2009
- Hobart 4th June 2009

189 participants (including 7 men) attended the consultations. They represented a wide range of community organisations. A list of the 88 organisations represented is attached as Appendix 1.

Consultation presentation including questions and responses

A presentation paper (Appendix 2) and an informative powerpoint presentation on UNSCR1325 and the current 14 National Action Plans was developed to provide background to the consultations and to promote lively discussions. Participants' responses to questions were recorded and transcribed accordingly as research data. These responses have informed the Summary of key findings.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Key national consultation findings

- There is overwhelming support for the relevance of UNSCR 1325 to Australia.
- There is extremely strong agreement on the need to develop an Australian National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325, with differences of view on how this might practically occur.
- We can learn from the 14 plans already written, of the need to include: diversity; a national and international focus; broad understandings of peace and security; and a clear action plan matrix.
- There was widespread agreement of the need for a strong champion of 1325. Most participants believed that while the Minister for the Status of Women should be centrally involved, the leadership of the implementation requires also the portfolios of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Defence, Trade, Immigration and Citizenship, Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Attorney-General. Some pacifists, believing there should be no army or weaponry, find it problematic to be in negotiation with the Department of Defence on issues of peace.
- There is a strong consensus that a NAP should have both a national and international focus.
- Most participants agreed that there are clear connections between the prevention of conflict, the protection of women and girls during conflict, women's participation at all levels of decision-making and the need for prosecution of gender-based war crimes. Some felt that increasing participation of women (in peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding and political decision-making) should be prioritised.
- The development of a NAP should be premised on broad definitions of peace and security.
- There is vast agreement that human rights, development, education and women's empowerment are critical components of the process of furthering peace and security for women and girls and must be explicitly addressed.
- There is strong support for a NAP to be built around an action plan matrix with measurable targets, Ministerial and agency responsibilities defined clearly, budgets, timelines, accountability and evaluation.
- The need for an inclusive, consultative process to develop a NAP was stressed repeatedly. Many participants urged the need to listen to the voices of refugees who have recently come from war-torn zones as well as listening to indigenous women, diverse inter-faith groups, women's NGO and academics.
- There is great evidence of the need for Peace Studies to be taught in schools and in universities.

Where to next?

There is sufficient evidence from national consultations in each city to recommend:

- progress to develop a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 on 'Women, Peace and Security'.
- incorporation of inter-departmental portfolios and Ministers, key stakeholders, academics and significant leaders in civil society.

- WILPF and UNIFEM and other key, informed women would be willing to meet together to offer a draft of possible content recommendations for an Australian National Action Plan.

DETAILED SUMMARY: Key national consultation findings

Relevance of 1325 to Australia

There is tremendous agreement that 1325 is highly relevant to Australia and thus there is a need to develop an Australian National Action Plan. However, who should be involved and the terms of engagement provoked some controversy. Central recurring reasons why it is considered so relevant revolve around three main areas; national issues, international concerns and gender equality.

National issues

- Australia's aspiration to be a 'creative middle power' provides opportunities for significant leadership in furthering peace and security in peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction. In such a context, many people considered an Australian NAP to be a vital and valuable means of ensuring a promotion of peace and security in the region as well as in Australia.
- The culture of the Australian Defence Force still seems very male-oriented. Appropriate gender training of military personnel and peacekeepers is required.
- Some asserted the moral imperative to foster gender equality as part of the process and believed that Australia has a moral duty to implement this resolution and the capacity and resources to do so.
- Multicultural Australia includes refugees with the potential for communal tensions, hence there is a need to develop an overarching culture of peace and security within Australia.

International concerns

- The effects of war on women are enormous. Some participants maintained that Australia needs to accept the consequences of its involvement in wars as well as in peacekeeping. The majority strongly oppose all engagement in war.
- We have refugees here whose knowledge and experience of international conflict can be integrated into the development of a National Action Plan.

Gender Equality

- Many women want roles in promoting a peaceful society as well as, sometimes instead of, having roles in conflict prevention.
- To assist in building a culture of peace, a commitment for Peace Education (in schools, tertiary institutions and community groups) that includes gender equality, human rights, human security, empowerment and development is needed.

Lessons to be learnt from the 14 National Action Plans

- To be specific with regard to the lines of responsibility of Ministers, accountability, timelines, measurable outputs, targets, budgets and an evaluation process.
- Need an inclusive process to progress the NAP, including listening to the voices of refugees who have come from wars zones as well as Australian indigenous groups, inter-faith groups, women's NGOs and academics.
- There are clear connections between broad understandings of peace and security and enhancing human rights, development and women's empowerment.
- Need both a national and international focus.
- A NAP with concise recommendations with examples of what is needed provides tangible, achievable outcomes to ensure the task is not overwhelming.

Process of leading and developing a national action plan

Discussion on this issue was controversial. With regard to leading the development of an Australian NAP, there was general agreement by most participants of the importance of a strong champion of 1325 and the need for high-profile people to be involved in order to make it credible and accountable. There was widespread agreement of the need for an interdepartmental approach to gain a full range of the required expertise. Most participants believed that the Minister for the Status of Women should be involved in taking the lead in the development of the plan and in acting as a specialist reference group, but as an Outer Ministry, this portfolio does not have a sufficiently whole-of-government strength that is needed for full implementation.

Hence, most believed that the formulation of a NAP requires also the portfolios of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and Ministers for Foreign Affairs, Defence, Trade, Immigration and Citizenship, Attorney-General as well as Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs that includes the Status of Women. There was a suggestion of a Commissioner of Women, Peace and Security to report to a Minister, possibly to the Minister for the Status of Women.

There are differences of view. It is important to note that some believe that it is not sufficient to merely get government agencies like the Department of Defence to outline how it plans to comply with 1325. Indeed, some pacifists present at the consultations want no army or weapons of war. Some semi-pacifist pragmatists see virtue in a NAP if it sets out proper guidelines for army, UN peacekeepers and overseas police and aid agency operations. A few believe there are sufficient layers of accountability to ensure that Australians in zones of conflict act ethically and appropriately. A minority felt that women-only should be involved, but most desired the inclusion of men to make the implementation successful.

Recurring Views

- A coordinating unit in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet to ensure the overseeing and monitoring of the implementation across all relevant portfolios.
- An All-Party Parliamentary group would ensure progress/continuity under all governments/opposition and should consult frequently with women's NGOs.

The key stakeholders of a National Action Plan

- ADF, AFP, Office for Women, Trade, Immigration and Citizenship, AusAID, Attorney-General, Emergency Services
- UNIFEM
- Women's NGOs, WILPF
- diverse community groups: grassroots action groups, youth groups, older women, indigenous groups
- migrant and refugee associations
- inter-faith groups and churches
- academics, teachers
- Amnesty International, IWDA, Red Cross
- RSL, veterans and political journalists
- media, arts
- Peace Centres – in Universities
- male peace activists, educators and volunteers.

Australia's strategic priorities

There was extensive discussion on what an Australian National Action Plan should focus on. Most participants affirmed the interconnected nature of:

1. prevention of conflict;
2. protection of women and girls during conflict;
3. participation in peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding and political decision-making; and
4. prosecution of gender-based war crimes.

Common themes to emerge from a discussion on Australia's strategic priorities

- Redirect some of the defence budget into peacebuilding resources to redirect a culture of violence to cultures of peace.
- We need to skill up to be a peacemaking nation, to educate people to live peacefully, to change to an ethos of peace and to promote Australia's leadership in peace and security.
- There is a need to increase intelligence gathering to find root causes of insecurity against women in conflicts (particularly in areas where Australian ADF are deployed), and to have sustained dialogue to break down racist prejudices as well as violence and discrimination against women within Australia.
- Australia could play a major leadership role in the Asia-Pacific region in early intervention and sustained peacebuilding.

- Imbed the goals of 1325 into foreign policy and anti-terrorist strategies.
- Establish gender-sensitive education and training for diplomats, development aid workers, peacekeepers and peacebuilders with an emphasis of respect for women and human rights.
- Women's participation in decision-making on peace and security in Australia should increase in order to set examples for leadership elsewhere.
- There is merit in reviewing other domestic legislation against 1325.
- School curricula should enable boys and girls to learn about violence and war and the necessary conditions for building a just and sustainable global society. This includes learning about alternatives to violence, how to resolve conflict non-violently and bring about reconciliation between those in conflict.

Parameters of peace and security

There was widespread support of the need for any National Action Plan to adopt broad understandings. For example, peace is not merely the absence of war/violence. Peace (and its related keeping, making and building) involves proactive strategies that promote, cultivate, develop, encourage and sustain individuals, communities and nations to practise peace. Similarly, there was a strong plea for the need to understand security in a broader sense than in military terms alone. Poverty, illiteracy, food shortage, environmental degradation and ignorance of one's human rights contribute to subjective feelings and gendered experiences of human insecurity that can be partially addressed through the careful implementation of 1325.

Underpinning values of 1325

There was vast agreement that broad understandings of security and peace means that the implementation of 1325 requires interconnections with Ministries, policies, agencies, NGOs and community groups concerned with agendas of human rights, development and women's empowerment. This consultation has links to current consultations on human rights in that 1325 (and 1820) is premised on the equality, respect and dignity of involvement in full decision-making.

A national and international focus

The majority of participants affirmed that both a national and international focus on 1325 is needed. However, it was repeatedly emphasised that the establishment of positive national parameters to further peace and security was a prerequisite before adopting a regional or international focus. There was general agreement that we must be engaged with the Asia-Pacific region and for the need to implement 1325 wherever the Australian Defence Force are operating, while many acknowledged their opposition to Australia's involvement in ongoing wars.

Action plan matrix

There is extremely strong support for a NAP to be built around an action plan matrix with measurable targets, defined Ministerial and agency responsibilities, budgets, timelines, accountability and evaluation. Some people

cautioned the lack of vision and inflexibility in setting easy or wrong targets and a propensity to get bogged down by process. However the support for a clear action plan matrix is evident.

Rationale for the support

- gender-aggregated data can monitor improvements
- clarity of approach
- ensures action
- need targets and timelines to see if achievements are reached
- having a budget indicates a commitment to the plan
- regular evaluation is required to see how far we've progressed and allows for accountability and flexibility as situations change.

Increasing the participation of women in areas of implementation of 1325

There is still the need to explore cultural, social and attitudinal barriers to women's participation, both in Australia and in deployments overseas. There was a repeated desire stressed in all consultations on wanting to involve women meaningfully in furthering peace and security.

Suggestions to increase participation

- There was the suggestion to establish a Standing Civil Peacebuilding Service comprising 50 percent of women, trained in conflict prevention and management and conflict resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding. This Service would be deployed both internationally and within Australia as needed. A written submission suggested this should have an Ancillary Peacebuilding Reserve so the arrangement would be similar to the regular Army and Army Reserve.
- There was also the suggestion for a Women's Peacebuilding Force that could include ADF peacekeepers, AFP, civilian councillors, politicians, researchers and trainers.
- Build coalitions of women, including building partnerships with overseas women.
- Provide funding to establish and extend Peace Institutes or Centres in tertiary institutions to strengthen understanding on the need for gender equality, women's human rights and a culture of nonviolence and to support the work of peacebuilders at both national and international levels.
- Conflict management, conflict resolution and peace education should be a feature of the national school curriculum and take its place in workplaces with an emphasis on the participation of women.
- Involve migrants from war-torn countries and indigenous elders and inter-faith groups to learn from them what is needed.
- There is more need for training for women in politics, leadership, community development, debating skills, research skills. It is important to get more young women involved.

- An Australian National Action Plan could include a clause that says that Australia does not want to enter into peacemaking, peacekeeping or peacebuilding negotiations or make decisions on peace and security matters without reasonable representation of women.
- Numerical benchmarks for women in Australian delegations, to be progressively increased over time. These women need training and support.
- Measures to ensure that people living in rural and remote areas, regional centres and urban fringes are able to participate fully in all decision-making that affects their lives in peace and security terms.
- The involvement of gender-sensitive men with women, working on peace and security issues is important, particularly high profile men as ambassadors to promote 1325.

Suggestive conclusions from the evidence gained from the national consultations

How to develop a national action plan

UN-INSTRAW recommends a six-stage process for the development of a National Action Plan (Discussion Paper p.17). These stages are:

1. Building political will: advocacy and awareness-raising
2. Getting organised
3. Plan for Planning: Terms of Reference
4. Women, Peace and Security Assessments
5. Planning Meetings or Workshops
6. Drafting the Action Plan.⁶

The Australian government, in heeding the evidence of the tremendous support for the development of a National Action Plan gained through the national consultations could work progressively through each stage, with a commitment to deliver a NAP by an agreed date.

To date, 1325 has been strongly supported but poorly implemented. This gap between rhetoric and action is identified by UNIFEM as an 'accountability gap'.⁷

An Australian NAP would need to be consistent with the following existing international Conventions:

- 1980 CEDAW;
- 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

⁶ United Nations INSTRAW, 2006, *Securing Equality, Engendering Peace: A guide to policy and planning on women, peace and security*, Santo Domingo: INSTRAW, 28.

⁷ UNIFEM, 2008, *Progress of the World's Women 2008/2009. Who answers to women? Gender and Accountability*. New York: UNIFEM.

- 2000 Millennium Development Goals;
- 2008, resolution 1820 – aims to end the impunity that surrounds the abuse of women.

An Australian NAP on UNSR 1325 should complement (but not duplicate) commitments recommended by the 'Time for Action: national Council's Plan for Australia to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children, 2009-2021'. Similarly, it should be linked to a potential national Charter of Human Rights, but it warrants a specific national plans focused on 1325.

Where to next?

There is sufficient evidence from national consultations in each city to recommend:

- progress to develop a National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 on 'Women, Peace and Security'.
- incorporation of inter-departmental portfolios and Ministers, key stakeholders, academics and significant leaders in civil society.
- WILPF and UNIFEM and other key, informed women would be willing to meet together to offer a draft of possible content recommendations for an Australian National Action Plan.

Appendix 1: List of participating organisations represented

African Community representative	Legacy
African Women's Advocacy Union	Make Poverty History
Amnesty International	Medical Association for the Prevention of War
ANCORW (Aust Nat. Committee on Refugee Women)	Melaluca Refugee Association (NT)
ALP Labor Party	Mt Stuart Progress Assoc (Tas)
Anti Nuclear Alliance for WA	National Council of Women of Australia - several States represented
AnTar - Australians for Native Title & Reconciliation	Networking for Harmony (Tas)
Asia-Pacific Mediation Forum	NT State Office for Women
AusAID	Office of Development Effectiveness
Australian Centre for Peace & Conflict Studies University of Qld	Order of Australia Association
Australian Baha'i Community	Pan Pacific & SE Asia Women's Assoc Australia
Australian East Timor Friendship Association	Parliamentarians – Australian Democrats & Labor MPs
Australian Federation of University Women	Peace Coalition
Australian Human Rights Commission	Peace Trust (Tas)
Australian Peace Committee	Penguin Club of Australia
Australian Women's Coalition	People for Peace
Birds Australia (Tas)	Queensland Country Women's Association
Believing Women for a Culture of Peace	Red Cross International
BPW International (Business & Professional Women) – several state groups represented	Save the Children
Chorus of Women	Seymour People & Projects
Circles of Peace (SA group)	Shelter SA
Code Pink	Soroptimist International
Combined Charities Assoc (Tas)	St Mary's Church - Brisbane
Communist Party of Australia	Stop Violence against Women campaign
Council of Social Services of NSW	Spouses SA (Rights of Wives)
Domestic Violence Prevention Centre (Gold Coast Qld)	Tasmanian Conservation Trust
Economies Awareness and Action Australia	Tasmanian Global Learning Centre
Ethnic Communities Council of Qld	Tasmanian Women's Council
Faculty of Arts, Sydney University	Textile, Clothing & Footwear Council
Family History Society	The Greens (political party) several states represented and former Senator
FANG – Freemantle Anti Nuclear Group	UNAA – Status of Women – several states represented + UN-INSTRAW
Footprints for Peace	UNAA – (United Nations Australia Association) Several states represented – Vic, SA, Tas, WA)
Friends of Comfort Women Australia	UNIFEM – National Executive and several members
Friends of the Earth	United Nations Human Rights Committee
Friends of Palestine – several states represented	Union of Australian Women
Friends Singers (Quakers choir)	VIRWC-Victorian Refugee Women's Coalition
Girl Guides Association	WA for Racial Equality
Human Rights Week Organising Committee (Tas)	Whittlesea Interfaith Network (Vic)
International Coaching Federation of Australia (professional/business coaching)	Whittlesea Multicultural Committee (Vic)
IWDA (International Women's Dev Agency)	WIRE – Women's Information Service (Vic)
JERA International – Justice Equality Rights Access	War Widows Guild
Just Peace (Qld)	Women's Eco Movement
Wilderness Society	Women's International League for Peace & Freedom – National Exec and all states represented
WomenSpeak Alliance – several representatives	WA State Dept of Public Health