

**Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG)**  
***Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPC)***



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**Canada's Support for the  
Implementation of United Nations  
Security Council Resolution 1325  
on Women, Peace and Security  
in the African Great Lakes Region**

***Challenges and Perspectives for Burundi and  
the Democratic Republic of the Congo***

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## *Executive Summary*

The goal of this study is to assess the support provided by the Government of Canada for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (UNSCR 1325) in the Great Lakes Region, and in particular in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Burundi.

Adopted on October 31st 2000, with the support of Canada, then a member of the UN Security Council, UNSCR 1325 has become the foremost political tool to advocate for, define, implement and monitor the fundamental rights of women and girls throughout the spectrum of peace and security processes, including conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding and peacemaking, peace operations and reconstruction.

Canada has taken part in peace processes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Burundi through numerous multilateral and bilateral cooperation programmes. These programmes have enabled Canada to support the advancement of women through six major areas:

- ◆ women's participation in peace negotiations;
- ◆ women's participation in the electoral process;
- ◆ protection of the rights of girls and women, including from gender-based violence;
- ◆ participation of women in reintegration processes;
- ◆ integration of women's rights in the restoration of rule of law; and
- ◆ support for reconstruction and economic recovery.

A number of observations and recommendations have been identified to help further Canadian government as well as civil society support for peace and security in the Great Lakes Region.

### **Major observations and recommendations:**

1. Although Canada has supported many initiatives for the advancement of women, we cannot say that Resolution 1325 has been systematically used as an operational and political tool to promote women's rights. It is recommended that the government put in place a mechanism to ensure the implementation of this resolution. This mechanism should also hold accountable the government and all other actors, including civil society, by undertaking a monitoring and evaluation function.
2. Canada is involved in the international efforts to stabilize failed and fragile states, but at present, this commitment is highly centered on the fight against terrorism. It is recommended that Canada pay more attention to countries that are high on fragility lists, yet under the radar of terror threats and therefore tend not to benefit from Canadian technical assistance. Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are key examples of such countries. Resolution 1325 should be used in programmes within such countries aimed at strengthening national capacities. It is also recommended that Canada actively participate in judicial and security sector reforms within these countries.
3. Canada's assistance to Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo is mainly channelled through multilateral agencies. However, while the approval protocols of these programmes are governed by the principle of gender equality, there exists no mechanism whereby Canada can verify whether the disbursement and management of its funds have contributed, or not, to the advancement of women. It is recommended that the government identify mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the capacity of these

- multilateral agencies to truly implement gender equality. To do so, it is recommended that Canada become more involved in the operational implementation of Resolution 1325 by making Canadian expertise available to multilateral agencies, peace operations and humanitarian initiatives, and by sitting on advisory committees of the major regional programmes.
4. To respond efficiently to the issue of women, peace and security, it is important to rely on empirical studies. The Canadian response would be more effective if it was based on research undertaken to this end. It is recommended that the research community, such as IDRC, create a research fund devoted to the Great Lakes Region, particularly to women's participation in peace, reconciliation and reconstruction processes.
  5. Sexual violence crimes have reached incredible levels in the Great Lakes Region. CIDA has recently committed itself to participating in an inter-agency initiative coordinated by UNFPA to prevent and respond to sexual violence in the DRC. CIDA must be applauded for this commitment as the project addresses one of the most terrifying aspects of the war in the Congo. However, the effectiveness of the Canadian response will depend on the strategy adopted vis-à-vis sexual violence. It is recommended that the government formulate a regional strategy addressing sexual violence in all its aspects: human security, security sector reform, judicial reform, strengthening the political and economic status of women, protection of youth, victim reintegration mechanisms and awareness-raising campaigns involving men. Finally, it is recommended that this strategy give an important role to women's groups in the fight against sexual violence.

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## *Acronyms and Abbreviations*

ACIPA:	Action Citoyenne pour la Paix
AMIB:	African Mission in Burundi
CAFOB:	Collectif des Associations et ONGs Féminines du Burundi
CAP:	Consolidated Appeal Process
CPC:	Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee
CECI:	Centre d'études et de coopération internationale
CEDAW:	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women
CIDA:	Canadian International Development Agency
CONADER:	National Demobilization and Reintegration Commission
CVR:	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
DCI:	Defense for Children International
DDR:	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DDRR:	Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Resettlement and Reintegration
DRC:	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAC:	The Department of Foreign Affairs Canada
FARDC:	Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo
GPWG:	Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group
ICRD:	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDRC:	International Development Research Centre
IHAP:	International Humanitarian Assistance Programme
IPS:	International Policy Statement
MDRP:	Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme
MONUC:	United Nations Mission in the Congo
NGO:	Non-governmental Organization
OCHA:	UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ONUB:	United Nations Operation in Burundi
PAHM:	Programme Against Hunger, Malnutrition and Disease
PDCMPS:	Peacekeeping and Security Capacity-Building Programme
PNDR:	National Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration Programme
PNPFC:	National Programme for the Advancement of Congolese Women
PRSP:	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RFP:	Réseau Femmes et Paix
SNIG:	Stratégies Nationales d'Intégration du Genre dans les politiques de développement
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO:	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNFPA:	United Nations Population Fund
UNHCR:	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM:	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNIPOL:	United Nations Police
WCC:	War Child Canada
WFP:	World Food Programme
WHO:	World Health Organization

## *Acknowledgements*

Research on Canada's support for implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 has required a series of consultations in Canada as well as information gathering from organizations working in the Great Lakes Region. Thanks to the collaboration of a number of colleagues, I was able to access many documents published outside Canada. I would like to sincerely thank Hodan Adou and Mildred Warrakah, UNIFEM Office in Nairobi, Miranda Tabifor, UNIFEM Office in Kinshasa, Cécile Mukarubuga, UNIFEM Regional Office in Dakar, Stéphanie Ziebell, UNIFEM Office in New York, Augusta Angelucci, UNDP in Kinshasa, Espérance Musirimu and Louis-Marie Nindorera, Global Rights Office in Bujumbura.

The cooperation of a number of colleagues at CIDA and FAC was invaluable to better understanding Canada's commitments and achievements in the area of peace and security, and more specifically its role in supporting the implementation of Resolution 1325 in the Great Lakes Region.

I also take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the International Development Research Centre for funding this study as well as to David Lord, Coordinator of the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC), Kristiana Powell, Researcher with the North-South Institute, Cindy Issac of CARE Canada and Surendrini Wijeyaratne, Coordinator of the Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG).

Lastly, I would like to dedicate this study to the thousands of women of the Great Lakes Region who, despite the very difficult environment, work relentlessly to secure social cohesion and the survival of their communities. In August 2005, I was in Goma and visited a rural clinic treating the most extreme cases of sexual violence. The victims I met there were between 12 and 70 years of age. When I asked Taté<sup>1</sup>, a seventy-year old women who had just been raped, whether she had any children and grand-children, she simply replied: "No my child, they have all been killed, just as I have been, for I consider myself to be a living tomb."

How many of these Taté's are there in the Great Lakes Region? How many more will it take before a stop is put to this "war within a war"?<sup>2</sup> Despite their incredible suffering, women are the backbone of the region and have demonstrated incredible strength in supporting peace and recovery efforts. These experiences of women in the region demand increased support for women's rights to peace, protection, equity, justice and dignity. The future stability of the sub-region depends upon this.

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<sup>1</sup> Taté means "grandmother" in Lingala.

<sup>2</sup> Expression coined by Human Rights Watch. *The War Within the War, Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in Eastern Congo*, June 2002.

## *Methodology*

This study is part of wider discussions on the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The terms of reference defined by the Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG) set out to examine the extent to which Resolution 1325 has influenced the policies and programs supported by Canada in the Great Lakes Region. The study aims to: document and examine Canada's contributions to the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Burundi and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC); identify from women's point of view, the main issues relating to peace in the two countries; and make policy recommendations on women, peace and security in these two countries.

While supporting a regional approach essential for viable solutions to peace and security in the Great Lakes Region, this study focuses more specifically on two countries: Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). The study conducts a gender-based analysis of peace, democratization and reconstruction processes in these two countries. The study also summarizes the achievements to which Canada has contributed and highlights areas for more vigorous action to advance gender equality and women's rights in transitions to peace.

An examination of Canada's support in the implementation of Resolution 1325 cannot be limited to an "internal" assessment of what Canada had accomplished. While obviously, Canada's achievements will need to be examined first and foremost in the light of its international policy commitments, the needs identified on the ground help us to better assess Canada's impact. In other words, to fully understand the challenges, one must examine Canada's contribution from an internal point of view as well as against the needs identified by overseas partners.

Therefore, Canadian sources as well as sources in the field have been consulted in the course of this study. Part of our work reflects discussions with officials within CIDA and FAC. Official sources of the Government of Canada on the Great Lakes Region, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo have been consulted as well as documents published by multilateral agencies active in the region and from Canada's partners: UNDP, the World Bank, MONUC, ONUB, OCHA, UNIFEM, UNICEF and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region. Official documents of the Congolese and Burundi governments have also informed this study, as have the initiatives of women's groups in the region.

## I. Introduction

*"We, the Delegates to the Great Lakes Regional Women Meeting: [...], call on the Heads of State and Government [...] to put in place a regional mechanism with requisite resources to ensure women's equitable representation and effective participation in peace, governance and development processes at national and regional levels."*

*Kigali Declaration,  
October 9, 2004*

Geographically, the African Great Lakes Region consists of Uganda, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, four countries marked by years of political crisis and extremely violent armed conflict. The region includes many neighbouring countries indirectly affected by the situation due to the presence of refugees on their territory and also to the permeability of the borders facilitating the spread of cross border criminal activities.

To varying degrees, each country in the Great Lakes Region faces enormous challenges associated with democratic transitions, peacebuilding and reconstruction.

One of the major challenges to ensuring a sustainable, equitable and inclusive peace concerns the role and place of women in national and regional conflict resolution mechanisms. This study seeks to shed light on Canada's contribution to the implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325<sup>3</sup> (UNSCR 1325) in the African

Great Lakes Region. **The outstanding feature of Resolution 1325 is its ability to politically implicate and integrate women's contributions in the numerous peace and security processes, in particular constitutional and institutional reforms, negotiations, electoral processes, reintegration and reconstruction programmes, and justice and reconciliation mechanisms.**

Through a number of multilateral and bilateral partnership programmes, Canada has been involved in peace processes in the Great Lakes Region since well before the adoption of Resolution 1325. Canada has also helped to move forward an agenda focussing, among other things, on the advancement of women and gender equality.

Canada's support of Resolution 1325 is in compliance with its international policy commitments, including those set out in the former government's International Policy Statement.<sup>4</sup> Canada's support for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, at least in its response presented to the UN Secretary General in July 2004,<sup>5</sup> is based on a whole-of-government,<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> United Nations, Security Council, *Resolution 1325, S/RES/1325 (2000)*.

<sup>4</sup> Government of Canada, *Canada's International Policy Statement: A Role of Pride and Influence in the World*, April 2005. NB: The International Policy Statement, tabled in Parliament by the previous Liberal government in April 2005, is the most recent overarching statement of Canadian foreign policy, but has not been endorsed by the current Conservative government.

<sup>5</sup> The Government of Canada Response to request for information by UN Secretary-General concerning full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, July 2004.

<sup>6</sup> The three D's approach: Diplomacy, Defence and Development. This approach engages concurrently the Department of Foreign Affairs, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and CIDA.



multidimensional, multilateral approach centered on people: human rights promotion, alleviating humanitarian crisis, support for international peacekeeping operations and support for disarmament programmes under the human security framework.

Generally, in supporting the implementation of Resolution 1325, Canada has sought to: ensure the representation of women in decision-making processes; achieve gender balance in peace operations; support the mainstreaming of a gender-based approach in peace negotiations and implementation mechanisms; provide financial, technical and logistical support to gender equality training programmes; and call for an end to impunity for acts of sexual and gender-based violence.

While acknowledging Canada's commitment in the DRC and Burundi, we must also point out that this commitment is not proportional to the immense challenges facing these two countries as they emerge from crisis. For example, Canada has not provided peacekeepers to the UN Mission in Burundi (ONUB). Regarding the DRC, only eight military officers and one officer from the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have been deployed to MONUC. Although appreciated, this Canadian contribution seems rather negligible in view of the fact that there are 18,000 peacekeepers in MONUC.

Canada's response to the exceptionally devastating crisis in the Great Lakes Region should be much greater considering the impact of instability in the Great Lakes Region on Central and Eastern Africa as a whole, the horrible suffering inflicted upon civilian populations in general, and women and children in particular, and the massive humanitarian toll including thousands of deaths and a dramatic decline in life expectancy as well as standard of living.

The distribution of Canadian resources should be dictated by the most urgent needs wherever they may occur, rather than only by geo-strategic considerations. This requires a political will that is not only responsible, but also expresses solidarity with the people most in need. Such an approach would place human security and humanitarian values at the core of Canada's international policy commitments.

For Canada, the challenge is one of appropriate weighting. This is not to say that Canada should withdraw from countries such as Haiti or Afghanistan where reconstruction and stability depend on a firm commitment on the part of the U.N. Rather, it encourages Canada to undertake similar efforts in other regions facing the same, if not worse, humanitarian catastrophes. Such efforts would demonstrate Canada's role in the world as one that balances humanitarian values including the protection of civilians, while delivering on commitments to international peace and security.

In its latest report on human development, the UNDP reminds us that since 1998, terrorism has been responsible for nearly 20,000 fatalities globally. The report emphasizes that for the same period, conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has directly or indirectly caused nearly 4 million deaths, equivalent to 7% of the population.<sup>7</sup>

For years, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the World Bank and UNDP have drawn the attention of donors to fragile states. It is now recognized that states characterized by weak governance and weak institutions constitute fragile states, and that such states can be potential centres for terrorism. This attention paid to fragile states is encouraging. However, this analysis tends to examine security from what can be perceived as a

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<sup>7</sup> UNDP, Human Development 2005, *International cooperation at a crossroads: Aid, trade and security in an unequal world*, p. 151

paradigm heavily centered on the North. Terrorism threatens security in developed countries – that is obvious. Yet, terrorism is but one type of violent conflict, to conceive of world security based overwhelmingly on this perspective may lead us to forget that since 1990, three million people have died as a direct result of numerous forms of violent conflict and these persons lived in developing countries.<sup>8</sup>

Canada is firmly committed to international efforts aimed at stabilising fragile states. It has, among other initiatives, set up the Stabilisation and Reconstruction Task Force (START) at the Department of Foreign Affairs, as well as the Global Peace and Security Fund. While these initiatives are to be applauded, we cannot help but note that Iraq and Afghanistan alone have absorbed 80% of the bilateral resources devoted to fragile states.<sup>9</sup> In order that Canadian commitments to peace and security be effective and equitable, the government should develop a strategy in support of fragile states based on three principles: a holistic view of human security which explicitly incorporates freedom from gender-based violence; the urgency to act where needs are most pressing; and the responsibility to build a sustainable peace in the countries concerned. If these three principles are respected, countries like the DRC and Burundi will have better chances of seeing increased support by Canada for peacebuilding efforts, an integral part of which is support for the implementation of Resolution 1325.

## *II. Canada's Support for the Implementation of Resolution 1325 in the Great Lakes Region*

*"...the discrimination against women, particularly at decision-making levels, in the areas of peace and security, democracy and political, economic and social governance calls for a deliberate, immediate and sustainable redress;"*

*Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration on Peace, Security, Democracy and Development in the Great Lakes Region (November 19-20 2004)*

In the Great Lakes Region, war has resulted in the structural breakdown of the countries and societies concerned. Women are 52% of the region's population,<sup>10</sup> and women and children are 75% of the persons uprooted by war.<sup>11</sup> Women in the region have experienced extreme levels of gender-based violence and are further challenged by cultural, political, social and economic marginalisation and exclusion. As such, the success of peace

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, p. 151.

<sup>9</sup> Canadian Council for International Cooperation, Commentary on the International Policy Statement, April 2005 : <http://www.ccic.ca/e/002/policy.shtml#commentaries>

<sup>10</sup> République démocratique du Congo, *Programme national pour la promotion de la femme congolaise (2005-2015)* (National Programme for the Advancement of the Congolese Women) (August 2005), p.5; République du Burundi, *Convention sur l'élimination de toutes les formes de discrimination à l'égard des femmes : premier rapport périodique de mise en application*, p. 3 (Convention for the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women – first progress report on implementation) (November 2005),

<sup>11</sup> République démocratique du Congo, *Stratégies nationales d'intégration du genre dans les politiques* (March 2004), p. 32 / République du Burundi, *Rapport national d'évaluation décennale de mise en application du programme d'action de Beijing* (March 2004). According to this report, 60% of the war victims are women, p. 14.

processes will be influenced by the extent to which such structures of marginalisation are dismantled.

**Wars in the region have exposed the different realities and experiences of men and women, and have brought to light two critical points: the extent of disparity between the genders, and therefore, the need to develop reconstruction policies and programmes centered on the advancement of women and gender equality.**

Peace processes have generally developed frameworks recognizing women's rights at the constitutional level. For example, in Burundi and Rwanda, through a series of political reforms and awareness-building initiatives, women are now represented in the decision-making structures of their countries. It should be noted, that it is the peace and reconstruction context that enabled such gains toward gender equality to occur despite the unspeakable suffering inflicted upon women during war.

Today, Rwandan women constitute nearly 35% of Ministers and State Secretaries, 49% of Ministers of Parliament and 30% of Senators. The Supreme Court of Rwanda is presided over by a woman and five of the 12 judges are women.<sup>12</sup> In the same positive shift, the first assessment report of the Government of Burundi on the Convention for the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) indicates that Burundian women today represent 35% of Ministers, 23% of the Provincial Governors, 30.15% of the Ministers of Parliament and 32.16% of Senators.<sup>13</sup> Hopefully, women will be as successful in the next Congolese elections.

As mentioned earlier, Canada has supported women's participation in peace and reconstruction processes in the Great Lakes Region before Resolution 1325 was adopted. This region has been at war for more than a decade and Canada has been involved in the peace initiatives in numerous ways; in particular, it has sent special envoys, encouraged mediation efforts and supported multilateral and regional conflict resolution programmes.

Canada is amongst the major donors to UN agencies and has contributed to peace missions (MONUC, ONUB), to the regional Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration Programme (World Bank) and to agencies such as the UNDP, UNICEF, UNIFEM, OCHA and UNHCR. It is important to note that in its report on the implementation of Resolution 1325, UNIFEM expressly thanked countries, including Canada, for supporting its peace and security programming.<sup>14</sup>

Even though this study is centered on Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo, it is crucial to keep in mind the *regional dimension* of the conflict when addressing gender issues. A regional approach is necessary because security problems such as small arms trafficking, the use of child soldiers, illegal exploitation of mineral and natural resources and population displacement are cross-border issues, and disregarding these cross border dynamics could lead to regional tensions and unrest.<sup>15</sup>

The Tripartite +1 Joint Commission brings together the governments of Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and the DRC and acts as a joint regional mechanism for security problems. The

<sup>12</sup> Mukararasi Godeliève, *Les Rwandaises après le génocide*, Revue Relations (March 2006), pp.14-16.

<sup>13</sup> République du Burundi/PNUD, *Convention sur l'élimination de toutes les formes de discrimination contre les femmes. Premier rapport périodique de mise en application* (November 2005), p.18.

<sup>14</sup> UNIFEM, *Women, Peace and Security : UNIFEM Supporting Implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325* (October 2004).

<sup>15</sup> OECD, *Security Reform and Governance: Policy and Good Practice* (May 2004).

Commission emphasises the importance considering regional dimension of peace and security issues. The International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR), convened as a follow-up mechanism for regional dialogue, also emphasizes the need for peace processes to be regionally based.

The ICGLR is a joint mechanism created by the U.N. and the African Union. Canada plays an important role as co-chair of the Group of Friends of the Great Lakes Region, responsible for coordinating the political, diplomatic and technical assistance to the ICGLR.

Evaluating Canada's support for the advancement of women through the ICGLR is one means of assessing Canada's contribution to Resolution 1325. It is estimated that between 2004 and 2006, Canada has contributed \$1,500,000 to the Multi-Donor Fund managed by UNDP to facilitate the ICGLR. On the diplomatic level, Canada's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region has done the utmost to ensure that the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration acknowledge, fully and with sensitivity, the basic needs of women and their right to participation and decision-making.

The successful recognition of women's rights in the Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration is in great part due to the Regional Women's Meeting held one month before the Special Summit of the Heads of State. This women's meeting was supervised by UNIFEM thanks to Canada's support, among others. The meeting resulted in the Kigali Declaration which served as an advocacy document during the Heads of State and Government meeting.

This strategic approach has resulted in a powerful declaration which recognizes the atrocities experienced by women during the war and commits Heads of State to reducing gender disparities, ensuring the protection of women and doing their utmost to translate Resolution 1325 into concrete action.

The Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration revolves around four priority areas, each reflecting the demands of women: peace and security, democracy and good governance, economic development and regional integration, and lastly, humanitarian and social issues.

The Dar-Es-Salaam Declaration proposes a series of follow-up mechanisms including the Inter-ministerial Regional Committee responsible for preparing specific, feasible and measurable projects with definite short, middle and long term goals. As stated in the Declaration, the work of the Regional Committee will be strengthened by civil society representatives and female experts. Further, one third of its members will be women.

### ***III. Canada's Support for the Implementation of Resolution 1325 in the Democratic Republic of the Congo***

The international cooperation programme implemented by CIDA in the Democratic Republic of the Congo focuses on three main areas: humanitarian aid; support to peace, reconciliation and human rights initiatives; and rehabilitation of social services and basic economic services. Estimated at more than \$170 million since 1998, the aid is delivered through three main channels: bilateral cooperation, multilateral cooperation and partnership with Canadian NGOs.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> This information is provided on the Web Site of the Canadian International Development Agency: <http://acdi-cida.gc.ca>.

As explained in the Methodology section, analysis of Canada's contribution to the implementation of Resolution 1325 requires both a horizontal and vertical approach: the review of Canadian achievements and the examination of the needs identified in the field by multilateral and national partners entailing government, civil society and women's groups. Used in this manner, Resolution 1325 becomes an evaluation tool consisting of two interrelated components: as assessment of Canada's contributions, while maintaining a focus on challenges faced in the short to medium term. Canada's support for Resolution 1325 can be summarized under six headings:

### ***III.1. Support for women's participation in peace negotiations***

Canada's assistance has taken various forms, including support for women's participation in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue. UNIFEM expressly mentions Canada's contribution to the organization of the Multi-Party National Forum held in Nairobi in February 2002.<sup>17</sup> At the end of this Forum, the 60 women participants who had come from every region of the Congo launched the *Nairobi Declaration and the Women's Common Platform for Peace*. Following women's participation in peace talks, both at the regional and national levels, the *Global and Inclusive Agreement* approved at the end of the political negotiation process incorporated the principle of gender parity based on Resolution 1325. However, this political recognition is somewhat of a paradox since, according to the Ministry of Women's Affairs, the number of positions held by women in new institutions of the Transitional Government has dropped significantly.<sup>18</sup> Only 14% of ministers and 8.5% of deputy-ministers are women. Women were not named as provincial governors, and of 620 parliamentarians, only 60 are women.

### ***III. 2. Support for restoring the rule of law***

The peace process in the DRC has provided an opportunity to initiate reforms related to the justice and security sectors and to institutional and constitutional frameworks. Canada's contribution has been channelled through multilateral agencies and coordinated in the field by the UNDP. Assistance was also allocated through Canadian NGOs involved in mobilization and advocacy activities. On the constitutional level, the greatest victory was the recognition of the principle of gender parity and equality in the new Congolese Constitution adopted in December 2005 (section 14). The Constitution also recognizes the responsibility of the State in the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (section 15). Unfortunately, it must be noted that legislation that discriminates against women continues to exist, particularly in the Family and Labour codes.

Reforms have been initiated in the judicial and security sectors which focus on reviewing discriminatory laws and formulating new laws such as the *Proposed Act on Sexual Violence* and creating a new security corps consisting of the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC) and the Congolese National Police. MONUC as well as the UNDP incorporate gender equality in their reform efforts; however, these reforms come up against various obstacles, especially the rigid attitude of national partners and the lack of resources.

### ***III. 3. Support for protection from sexual and gender-based violence***

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<sup>17</sup> UNIFEM, *Securing the Peace: Guiding the International Community towards Women's Effective Participation throughout Peace Processes* (October 2005), p. 6.

<sup>18</sup> République Démocratique du Congo/PNUD, *Programme National pour la Promotion de la Femme Congolaise (2005-2015)* (août 2005), p. 12.

The U.N. Secretary General's twentieth report regarding the U.N. Mission in the DRC (MONUC) indicates that joint coordination mechanisms have been established at the central and provincial levels with a view to promoting a pragmatic approach to civilian protection, including direct protection activities carried out by MONUC peacekeepers.<sup>19</sup> According to the same report, the Mission's civilian, police and military components work closely with OCHA, UNHCR, UNICEF and the humanitarian community.

This statement should not, however, conceal the persisting and massive physical and sexual violence to which women and girls are constantly subjected. In an internal report on sexual violence in the DRC, MONUC notes that acts of sexual violence target all groups of women: pregnant, girls, youth, adult and elderly women.<sup>20</sup> The report notes a series of physical, psychological and social consequences caused by these acts of violence: gynecological problems, collateral disorders, unwanted pregnancies, post-traumatic stress, sexually transmitted disease including HIV/AIDS, and stigmatization.

In this context, CIDA's support of a project designed to address sexual and gender-based violence (\$15 million) should be applauded. The project provides substantial assistance to the *Interagency & Multisectoral Initiative to Prevent and Respond to Sexual Violence in Populations Affected by Armed Conflict*. The Interagency and Multisectoral programme is a joint initiative of MONUC, UNIFEM, UNICEF, WHO, UNDP and OHCHR coordinated by UNFPA.<sup>21</sup> This initiative addresses sexual violence by providing for protection, medical and legal assistance, and socioeconomic reintegration of victims. One of its goals by 2007 is to have responded to the needs of at least 25,000 victims in three provinces: Western province, Equator Province and Maniema Province.

While acknowledging the crucial importance of the Interagency and Multisectoral programme, it is difficult not to notice *the low number of women targeted by the project*. It is well recognized that the problem of sexual violence has attained such proportions that the most conservative statistics place the number of women affected in the Eastern part of the country alone at a minimum of 40,000.<sup>22</sup> Other studies consider that for each rape that is reported, 30 are not.<sup>23</sup>

Considering the magnitude of sexual and gender-based violence in the DRC, and taking into account the regional dimensions of the problem, Canada's commitment should be based on a specifically Canadian strategy and plan of action that responds to these regional dimensions. Presently, nothing indicates that such tools have been developed.

<sup>19</sup> United Nations, Security Council, *Twentieth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo* (December 2005), p. 13.

<sup>20</sup> Report available in French: Nations Unies/MONUC, *Rapport thématique sur les violences sexuelles en RDC : janvier 2002-décembre 2003*.

<sup>21</sup> Available in French: Système des Nations Unies en RDC, *Requête de financement pour la prévention et la réponse aux violences sexuelles faites aux femmes, aux jeunes et aux enfants*, août 2004.

<sup>22</sup> Synergie des Femmes pour les victimes des violences sexuelles. Campagne annuelle de solidarité et de compassion avec les femmes et filles victimes des violences sexuelles (2005).

Amnesty International, République Démocratique du Congo. *Violences sexuelles : un urgent besoin de réponses adéquates*, (octobre 2004), p. 13.

<sup>23</sup> This information is provided by Women's Equity in Access to Care and Treatment : <http://www.we-actx.org>.

The *sustainability and effectiveness* of initiatives against sexual violence are a challenge. The breakdown of the Congolese State has resulted in the near total collapse of the socio-sanitary, socio-legal and socio-economic infrastructure of the country. Medical assistance is presently provided by humanitarian organizations that make do with limited means and with no clear ethical guidelines within which to work. In order to respond effectively to the problem of sexual violence, there needs to be in place a short term plan, as well as medium and long term plans. For any of these plans to be successful, hospitals, national health centres and their equipment must be restored, medical staff needs to be trained, and staff salaries have to be paid. As such, actions cannot be sustainable if, in the medium term, they do not seek to strengthen national capacities.

The national programme for the advancement of Congolese women mentions a series of specific recommendations to be adopted in order to respond to the needs of victims: training of 110 doctors specialized in gynaecology and obstetrics, 330 legal advisors, 550 social assistants and 1,100 nurses.<sup>24</sup> Among other things, the programme recommends that state structures, private structures, NGOs caring for women who are victim of sexual violence, as well as 110 NGOs responsible for rehabilitating these women be supported and supplied with necessary material. These recommendations offer ways of alleviating the suffering of women and of responding efficiently and in a sustainable manner to the problem of sexual violence.

**Three national policy documents (on poverty reduction, programme for the advancement of women and national strategies to mainstream gender into development policies and programmes), unanimously acknowledge the grave phenomenon of sexual violence and its link with the low social, economic, political and cultural status of women which has been further exacerbated by civil war.** Hence, it is crucial to examine the issue of sexual violence in all its aspects, especially as it relates to human security, including the physical and economic security of women, women's position in society and access to public and community health. To this end, increased support for prevention, legal protection, economic promotion and the social reintegration of victims is required.

Furthermore, acts of sexual violence committed by men in uniforms are closely linked to the post-conflict context characterized by impasses in demilitarization, demobilization and reintegration (DDR/DDRRR), the slowness of security sector reform, the difficulty of achieving a substantial reduction of small arms and general impunity.

The persisting phenomenon of sexual and gender-based violence raises the question of how to address sexual and gender-based violence in the human security agenda, particularly vis-à-vis populations affected by armed conflict. This is an opportunity for Canada to contextualize its human security and protection of civilians policies to integrate threats of physical and sexual violence with issues of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; the fight against HIV/AIDS; and strengthening the socio-legal, political and economic status of women. Canada's commitment to fragile states should serve as a framework for action in responding to the problem of civilian protection in general, and of women in particular, by reinforcing national capacities in matters of security, justice and rebuilding.

### ***III. 4. Support for women's participation in the electoral process***

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<sup>24</sup> Op cit. paragraph 17, page 53.

The UN Secretary General cites Canada as one of the main sponsors for support to the electoral process managed by the UNDP.<sup>25</sup> UNDP and UNIFEM have undertaken a considerable number of initiatives aimed at training, awareness-raising and engaging the participation of women in electoral processes throughout the country.

For example, UNDP has organized training sessions for its staff and partners within government and the civil society. The goal of these sessions is to integrate a gender perspective in the planning of electoral process activities. A seminar on women, peace and security co-organized by UNDP, UNIFEM, MONUC, the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the National Commission on Disarmament and Reintegration (CONADER) sought to establish strategies for implementing Resolution 1325 in order to support women's participation in the elections.<sup>26</sup>

UNIFEM in partnership with women's organizations, Women's Affairs, the Independent Electoral Commission, UNDP and MONUC, coordinated a *global strategy* intended to secure equal access for men and women to electoral mandates and elected positions.<sup>27</sup> Following UNIFEM's campaign, surprising results were attained in the referendum which adopted the new Constitution as of December 2005: *three out of five voters were women* at the time of this referendum. Thus, in effect, the constitution was adopted through the endorsement of women. It is hoped that this level of participation will be sustained for the up-coming elections scheduled July 30th, 2006.

Nevertheless, despite the political mobilization of women during the constitutional referendum, women's rights activists have not succeeded in achieving an important objective: *the recognition of the principle of gender parity in the Electoral Act*. Despite many demands, the Electoral Act remains evasive on the principle of gender parity. The Electoral Act recognizes equal opportunity for men and women regarding elections, but does not specify a minimum quota, suggest the use of a closed list of candidates, nor other practical measures to support and increase women's participation.

UNIFEM supported a campaign for a closed and alternating list of qualified female candidates (*liste zébrée*), however, this was not adopted by the National Assembly. As a result, section 13 of the Electoral Act states that: "Each list is established taking into account, where appropriate, gender parity and the representation of handicapped persons. However, non parity between men and women in the course of the next elections shall not be grounds for ineligibility of a list (unofficial translation)." This clause makes it difficult to apply the principle of gender parity set out in section 14 of the Constitution.

### ***III. 5. Support for the Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) Program***

Canada supports DDR through the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) managed by the World Bank, which serves the DRC and eight other countries in the region including Burundi, Uganda and Rwanda.

Initiatives to integrate and operationalize gender dimensions in the national DDR program through training, awareness-raising and capacity-building have been coordinated by the UNDP,

<sup>25</sup> Op. cit., paragraph 18, p. 5.

<sup>26</sup> Available in French: PNUD/Unité Post Crise, Rapport d'activité : août 2002-mars 2005, p. 9

<sup>27</sup> UNIFEM/Department for International Development, *Women's Vote Tilts Balance in DRC's Constitutional Referendum* (March 2006).



MONUC, UNIFEM and CONADER.<sup>28</sup> Specific projects in support of women associated with fighting forces have been developed to take into consideration these unique experiences of women and programme managers have received checklists to help mainstream the gender perspective within programme activities.<sup>29</sup>

**Despite this, many roadblocks still adversely affect the fundamental rights of women in DDR processes:**

- The first problem concerns **gathering reliable statistics on girls and women associated with fighting forces**. According to CONADER, girls account for 10% of the armed forces in Ituri whereas surveys conducted by other sources in the East of the country estimate their participation to be as high as 30 to 40%.<sup>30</sup>
- The second issue concerns "**dependents**", that is, **persons for whom combatants are responsible and who, in majority, are women and children**. The National Programme was not mandated to take into account the basic needs of dependents such as transportation, health care, lodging, food, etc. at the time of demobilization and reintegration.
- The third challenge involves **women affected by conflict either as captive "wives" or sexual slaves** and who, for most part, have suffered serious personal injuries, sexual violence and unwanted pregnancies. Considered neither as dependents nor as combatants, their needs have not been defined or incorporated into the programme.
- The fourth problem concerns the thousands of **children fathered by foreign soldiers** who participated in the conflict in the DRC. The nationality of these children is a time bomb in a country where the political crisis has revealed considerable malaise with regards to the definition of citizenship.
- The fifth problem has to do with the **security, protection and basic needs in relation to the reintegration of uprooted women, girls and children**. Women and children constitute 75% of the 300,000 refugees and of three million internally displaced persons. According to the Ministry of Women's Affairs, these women and children have been subjected to numerous forms of violence, from abuse and neglect, to trauma, sexual violence, sexual exploitation and forced pregnancies.<sup>31</sup> This situation is recognized across sectors in the 2006 Action Plan which sounds the alarm and requests the urgent adoption of special measures in order to ensure the reintegration of women, youth and children in their community.<sup>32</sup>

<sup>28</sup> UNDP, Training trainers workshop on Gender and DDR. Joint UNDP/UNIFEM/MONUC initiative, (March 2005).

<sup>29</sup> Available in French : PNUD/UNIFEM, *Un cadre d'orientation pour l'intégration du genre dans le processus de désarmement, démobilisation et réintégration*, p. 17.

<sup>30</sup> This information is provided in the Action Plan/DRC 2006, p. 28. It is corroborated by a UNICEF study presented at a workshop entitled *Taking a Gender-Perspective to Strengthen the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) in the Great Lakes Region*, held jointly by the World Bank and UNIFEM in Kigali in November 2005.

<sup>31</sup> Available in French: République Démocratique du Congo/PNDU, *Stratégies Nationales d'Intégration du Genre dans les Politiques et Programmes de Développement en RDC*, mars 2004, p. 33.

<sup>32</sup> United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Action Plan 2006/Democratic Republic of the Congo*, February 2006, pp. 10, 54, 55.

### III. 6. Support for rebuilding and socio-economic recovery

According to the Human Development Report (2005), the Democratic Republic of the Congo ranks 167th out of 177 countries in terms of global poverty, as such, fundamental needs including poverty reduction and rebuilding, national reconciliation and economic recovery should focus the attention of the international community. To this end, greater sensitivity to gender equality must be unequivocally demonstrated.

*"The gender dimension should be better addressed in humanitarian programming, as women often act as heads of household and as primary care-givers in conflict-affected zones. They are the backbone of post-conflict economic and social support network."*

*Action Plan 2006/Democratic Republic of Congo*

In his humanitarian appeal for the 2006 Action Plan, Ross Mountain, Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator, used a strong metaphor which should be cause for serious reflection among international donors: "Over four million people have perished as a result of years of continuing conflict, a number which increases by some 1,200 every day and which is equivalent to an Asian tsunami each and every six months." To fully understand this tragedy, it is important to highlight the daily sacrifices made by women in order to ensure the survival and social cohesion of the country. It is estimated that 80% of Congolese households live under the threshold of poverty, earning less than a dollar per day. Add to this sad reality the fact that the survival of the great majority of households depends on women. For example, The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, the National Plan for the advancement of Congolese women and the Strategic Paper for Gender Mainstreaming state that more than 70% of rural women work in the agricultural sector. These women are responsible for 75% of the food production and 60% of work performed in the informal sector. Since the agricultural and informal sectors are essential to the very survival of families, it is women's labour that enables this survival.

Canadian aid provided to the DRC through bilateral and multilateral channels has certainly helped to ease the suffering of the Congolese people and to shed light on the considerable contribution of women to the survival of their families and communities. However, much more will be needed to help men and women out of the current humanitarian crisis. The \$682 million (US) Action Plan proposes a transition strategy for the DRC aimed at concurrently targeting humanitarian aid and development needs.

The Action Plan is based on three principal elements: *saving lives, creating a protective environment for communities and promoting stability*. The plan integrates gender equality, AIDS, human rights and humanitarian principles across all sectors and challenges the DRC's partners, including Canada, to move from simple assistance to sustainability based on strengthening national capacities and gender equality. As of March 2006, only 34% of the requested \$682 million (US) had been received.

#### ***IV. Canada's Support for the Implementation of Resolution 1325 in Burundi***

Canada does not have a bilateral cooperation programme with Burundi similar to that with the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Canada maintains diplomatic relations with Burundi essentially through the Canadian High Commission in Nairobi and Canada's Special Envoy to the Great Lakes Region.

Canadian assistance to Burundi is provided through multilateral cooperation channels and NGOs. Cooperation basically consists of regional projects and multilateral humanitarian programmes managed by CIDA and focussed on peace operations, security, rehabilitation and humanitarian assistance. Through various special funds, such as the *Canada Fund for Local Initiatives* (1999-2004), the *Canada Fund for Africa*, the *Canadian Landmine Fund* and the *Canadian Peacebuilding Fund*, Canada supports initiatives to strengthen security, justice and human rights. For 2004-2005, CIDA projects in Burundi are estimated at \$8 million (Cdn).

A review of Canada's contribution to implementation of Resolution 1325 in Burundi must take into account two realities. First, the absence of a bilateral cooperation agreement reduces Canada's capacity to ensure that programmes managed in the field give sufficient consideration to the advancement of women. Secondly, although Burundi is not part of the 25 priority countries on which Canada has decided to focus its development assistance, it is nevertheless eligible for other federal funds such as the *Fund for Peace and Security*. Therefore, it is still possible for Canada to strengthen its support for the peace process in Burundi, and through these other channels, make a greater contribution to the advancement of women.

Canadian support for the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Burundi can be summarized under six headings:

##### ***IV. 1. Support for women's participation in peace negotiations***

In collaboration with UNIFEM, the Nyerere Foundation organized an *All-Party Burundi Women's Peace Conference* in July 2000.<sup>33</sup> This conference brought together women from all political parties, women's associations and refugee and internally displaced women. The conference resulted in the *Final Declaration for Peace*, whose main recommendations were included in the formal peace agreement. According to UNIFEM's 2005 report entitled 'Securing the Peace: Guiding the International Community towards Women's Effective Participation throughout Peace Processes', more than 50% of women's concerns identified in the *All-Party Burundi Women's Peace Conference* were officially recognized and incorporated into the official Peace Agreement. As such, Burundi has become an interesting example to study women's contribution to peace processes and peace agreements.

The *Final Declaration for Peace* is a list of recommendations calling for the elimination of all discriminatory laws against women; recognition of women's right to socio-economic and political participation and the gender parity principle; recognition of the disproportionate effects of war on women and children; women's right to own property and land; recognition of women's contribution to Burundi's economic development; equal access to education for girls and boys;

<sup>33</sup> UNIFEM, *Engendering Peace. Reflections on the Burundi Peace Process* (2001).

condemnation of sexual violence to which women and girls have been subjected; and, finally, putting an end to impunity for these crimes.

It is not easy to distinguish Canada's role in relation to the advancement of women's rights from the conference for the simple reason that the successful involvement of women in the negotiations is mainly due to the Nyerere Foundation and the personal commitment of Nelson Mandela, who acted as mediator. However, a review of other less-publicized actions that have also contributed to the success of the Arusha Initiative reveals that Canada's role, although not high-profile, did contribute to the peace process generally, and women's place in the peace process in particular. Such contributions are primarily a testimony to the Canadian voluntary sector's commitment in Burundi since most Canadian assistance was channelled through Canadian NGOs.

For example, the Centre canadien d'études et de coopération internationale (CECI) helped establish the Collectif des Associations et ONG Féminines du Burundi (CAFOB), the first real national women's organization in the country. The launching of CAFOB was a high point in the history of the women's movement in Burundi since, for the first time, a "non-political" national federation brought women together around issues of common interest. With this organization, it became easier to influence public opinion in favour of women's rights and women's participation in decision-making. The success of the Arusha Conference can therefore be attributed in part to the existence of CAFOB and to the role it played in influencing public opinion to include women's specific concerns in the national political agenda.

Similarly, through the Action citoyenne pour la paix (ACIPA) Project, CECI supported the Women and Peace Network that played a critical role in helping to bring women's concerns to the fore during the August 2005 elections. The Network consists of 20 civil society associations. These associations have come together to create synergy at the national level around two main goals: to ensure that women contribute to peace and reconciliation; and to advocate for women's civic and political rights.

#### *IV. 2. Support for restoring the rule of law*

Through successfully carrying out the 2005 elections, Burundi achieved an important milestone in its transition to peace. The new Constitution, as well as the Electoral Act, acknowledges the principle of gender parity and equality. Sections 13 and 22 of the Constitution affirm the equality and the equal protection of all citizens under the law. These two sections reject all forms of exclusion and discrimination, including those based on gender. Further, Burundi's Constitution guarantees a minimum of 30% participation by women in Government, in the National Assembly, as well as in the Senate.

These successes are in large part due to women's mobilization and to the support they received both within and outside the country. ONUB's supervision has been central in the modernisation of political institutions and in raising awareness on gender equality in political circles. By contributing financially to ONUB, Canada has contributed to these advancements. **However, modernizing democratic governance structures is a long term undertaking which requires both horizontal and vertical action to enable institutional reforms to go hand in hand with the promotion of a democratic culture based on the principles of inclusion, equality and parity.** Unfortunately, Burundi's judicial system still retains laws which discriminate against women such as the *Nationality Code*, the *Code of the Person and the Family*, the *Labour Code* and the *Criminal Code*.

The task of modernization requires a great deal of political will and considerable resources. The reform of critical sectors such as justice and security cannot succeed without an actual national capacity-building plan. Here, Canada has been practically absent from direct engagement in gravely needed institutional reforms. The Canadian Landmine Fund and the Peacebuilding Fund have had a beneficial impact on the reduction of small arms, police and justice reform, promotion of human rights and support to victims of gender-based-violence; however, the sums allocated are not proportional to the problems experienced on the ground.

The Canadian contribution would be more significant and effective if Canada participated directly in the many judicial and security reforms underway, especially by deploying police officers as well as lawyers specialized in key areas such as protection of human rights, prevention of gender-based violence and succession and inheritance rights.

For example, it is unfortunate that the Peacekeeping and Security Capacity-Building Project (PDCMPS) managed by the Pearson Peacekeeping Centre (Montreal Campus) until the end of March 2006 did not serve to enhance the integration of gender equality in security sector reforms in the Great Lakes Region. Although, PDCMPS was intended exclusively to support francophone countries in Africa and one of its program components dealt with institutional reforms, neither Burundi nor the DRC benefited from the project.

#### ***IV. 3. Support for protection from sexual and gender-based violence***

Women and girls have been profoundly affected by the civil war. Some have lost their lives and many have been deliberately subjected to numerous crimes linked to sexual violence. According to OCHA, approximately 19% of teenage girls and women have been victims of sexual violence.<sup>34</sup> This reality however has not made the headlines or, to say the least, has not sufficiently attracted the attention of the international community. Yet, investigations conducted by credible organizations such as Human Right Watch<sup>35</sup> and Amnesty International<sup>36</sup> have demonstrated the massive and systematic nature of sexual violence inflicted on women by men in uniforms during the war. Domestic abuse is also wide spread and is estimated to affect one out of ten women.<sup>37</sup> Despite the pervasiveness of such violence, domestic violence is rarely discussed.

Burundi has been in a state of civil war since 1993. This conflict has killed more that 300,000 persons. The African Mission in Burundi (AMIB), consisting of 3,335 members, was deployed 10 years after the beginning of the war to support the peace process. A study by Kristiana Powell shows how this Mission would have been more effective had it received the required logistical and financial support and had its capacities for civilian protection been further developed.<sup>38</sup> The study also notes that initially, AMIB had not explicitly been given a mandate to protect civilians. It would be many months later that rules of engagement were developed authorizing troops to use force to protect civilians in cases of imminent danger.

<sup>34</sup> CAP/Burundi 2006, p.19

<sup>35</sup> Human Rights Watch, *Everyday victims : Civilian in the Burundian War* (December 2003), pp. 52-53

<sup>36</sup> Amnesty International, *Rape- the hidden human rights abuse* (February 2004).

<sup>37</sup> Available in French : PNUD/Burundi, *Rapport National sur le développement humain* (2003), p. 49.

<sup>38</sup> Kristiana Powell, *The African Union's Emerging Peace and Security Regime: Challenges for Delivering on The Responsibility to protect*, The North-South Institute (May 2005), pp. 25-31.

On May 21st 2004, AMIB was replaced by the UN Mission in Burundi (ONUB).<sup>39</sup> The latter will cease its operations in December 2006. The difficulties encountered by AMIB in relation to civilian protection could have been alleviated by many donor countries, including Canada. Civilian protection assumes that one has the capacity to prevent acts of violence, to prosecute or seek redress through the justice system, and to provide socioeconomic as well as psychological assistance to victims. These types of measures require a firm political and financial commitment. However, Burundi is not one of the countries with which Canada has decided to maintain bilateral cooperation, a choice that limits considerably Canada's capacity to support the transitional process and does not allow it to actively engage in security and judicial reforms designed to uphold women's rights. The Burundian government is finalizing a *Plan of action for the eradication of violence against women*.<sup>40</sup> For this plan to become operational, the Government of Burundi and women's groups need greater support of international partners, including Canada.

#### ***IV. 4. Support for women's participation in the electoral process***

Burundi has taken a decisive step by entrenching the principle of gender parity and equality in the new Constitution and in the Election Act. The results of August 2005 elections clearly demonstrate that significant numbers of women participated in the electoral process, including through organizing awareness campaigns, voting, participating as observers and poll supervisors and running as candidates.

In 1999, women accounted for only 13.5% of parliamentarians. Today, women make up 30% of parliamentarians, 32% of senators, 30% of provincial governors and 34.7% of ministers. Whereas in the past, women were mainly given the responsibility of family-related portfolios, today they occupy positions previously the exclusive domain of men: President of the National Assembly, Vice-President of the Republic and heads of various ministries: Development Planning, Foreign Relations and International Cooperation, Commerce and Industry, and Justice.

These results are above all the fruit of Burundian women's perseverance. However, international solidarity and support have also proved crucial. The electoral process is an integral part of the peace process. For example, if women had not succeeded in integrating their demands in the peace agreement the subsequent Constitution and Election Act would not have had to recognize the principle of gender parity and equality. Similarly, if there had not been constant and strategic mobilization at the grass-roots, public opinion and the political parties would not have been receptive to women's priorities.

Here again, Canada's role is not entirely clear due to the lack of bilateral cooperation. One can assume that Canada's contribution to ONUB has served to promote women's rights to participation and political representation. Similarly, the funds allocated to Canadian NGOs have contributed to strengthening women's participation in the electoral process. Such assistance is important but its impact will remain difficult to assess as long as there is no bilateral cooperation programme with Burundi and no mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the channelling of multilateral funds specifically toward women's rights, gender equality and the specific commitments to Resolution 1325.

Burundi is emerging slowly from profound crisis. Reconstruction requires mid- and long-term commitment and attention to the gains made by women. **Women have indeed made advances in**

<sup>39</sup>In compliance with the request made on November 23, 2005 to the Security Council by the Government of Burundi, ONUB is in the process of disengagement and its mandate is being redefined. It should have completely withdrawn by the end of 2006.

<sup>40</sup>Op. cit., paragraph 12.

terms of political representation, but there is always the possibility that an election, as democratic and inclusive as it may be, fails in the end to respond to people's aspirations if there is no genuine plan to reduce social inequalities. Women's representation is better today than ever before, yet, ensuring that the work of these newly-elected women is effective will remain a big challenge. Moreover, the right to participate and to make decisions must be measured against the collective emancipation of women. This right is much more than access to political visibility; rather, it underscores the need of modifying the relations between men and women in communities and in local governance structures.

#### ***IV. 5. Support for the Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) Program***

Canada is involved in the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) for ex-combatants. Despite persistent difficulties, it should be noted that efforts were made to make this programme more sensitive to the needs of girl ex-combatants and women associated with armed groups. In effect, national demobilization and reintegration programmes must conform to guidelines established by the MDRP<sup>41</sup> and therefore, demobilization activities must meet the needs of female and male ex-combatants. According to the MDRP guidelines, national programmes are to be based on six components, including *support to special groups*. These special groups consist of women and girl ex-combatants, children, handicapped persons and the chronically-ill. Canada has played an important role in the recognition of special groups as one of the six components of national programmes. Canada has also exerted political influence so that the Cape Town principles relating to child combatants also include girls involved in various functions of fighting forces.

The Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration National Programme (DDRR) addresses 55,000 combatants. As of October 2005, 438 (or 3%) of 14,000 demobilized combatants were women. For the same period, women also represented 3% of the forces demobilized and incorporated into the National Police Force. The U.N. Secretary General, in his sixth report, indicated that as of February 22, 2006, 16,724 adult combatants, including 482 women, as well as 3,015 child soldiers, had been demobilized.<sup>42</sup>

A workshop organized in November 2005 by the World Bank/MDRP Secretariat recognized the efforts of the DDRR Programme to take women's needs into account.<sup>43</sup> These efforts cover a number of areas: providing information to women on the rights of female ex-combatants during the pre-demobilization phase, ensuring women's access to separate lodgings during the demobilization phase, guaranteeing security and providing psychological and social assistance. However, the same workshop has revealed that this progress hides other problems which the DDRR Programme will need to resolve in order to respond to the needs of women and girls.

Female ex-combatants and women associated with armed groups continue to suffer from stigmatization. This stigmatization concerns women who are single heads of families as well as young women who have had children as a result of relations with combatants, women and girl victims of sexual violence and women who were associated with armed groups and who were rejected by their husbands after demobilization.

<sup>41</sup> Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Program, *Guidelines for National Program*, p.3

<sup>42</sup> United Nations, *Sixth Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Operation in Burundi*. S/2006/162 (March 14, 2006).

<sup>43</sup> Preliminary Workshop Report, *Taking a Gender-Perspective to Strengthen the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) in the Great Lakes Region* (April 2004).

To address these problems, the workshop suggested strengthening gender components at the institutional and executive levels. To achieve this goal, human resources in the area of gender need to be increased. The National DDR Commission should hire a gender specialist and the National Programme needs to set up a special unit responsible for female ex-combatants. Finally, the need for a dialogue with donors has been identified. This dialogue would result in a new way of presenting programmes, particularly reintegration programmes, based on a broader gender perspective. This dialogue would also examine progress indicators and entail the hiring of gender specialists. The dialogue should re-examine current gender programmes, including strategies for redistributing budget monies and providing specific budgetary allocations for gender programming.<sup>44</sup>

The implementation of these recommendations is crucial for female ex-combatants and women associated with armed groups. Canada, as well as other donors, is therefore being called upon to contribute. Whatever their response, donors will need to take into consideration the difficulty for female ex-combatants to identify themselves as such. The reality is that the great majority of girls and women self-demobilize and do not benefit from the national programme as do the men. The registration of former female combatants and women associated with armed groups must of course be a transparent process. However, until public opinion is ready to accept them, and as long as their military experience remains a source of suffering and trauma, these women will prefer to remain anonymous and rebuild their lives without putting themselves in any situation that might bring back unpleasant memories.

Therefore, a gender-sensitive programme needs to be able to provide women and girls the privacy and discretion they need to feel safe and in harmony with the socio-cultural dictates of their environment. Such a programme would also need to make the communities aware of the importance of accepting and rehabilitating these women. Finally, it would need to provide socioeconomic measures to truly help female ex-combatants rebuild their lives. This assumes adequate professional training, micro-projects, income-generating activities and access to basic social services. The U.N. Secretary General's Sixth Report, although it does not provide sex-disaggregated data, regrets that as of December 2005, only 1,995 ex-combatants had received such assistance.

Reintegration also concerns approximately 1.3 million uprooted persons, primarily women and children. Many widows and orphans are part of this group. These refugees and displaced persons have endured years and years of displacement, loss of land and livelihood, exposure to sexual violence and HIV/AIDS. The specific humanitarian needs arising from years in exile, in and outside the country, need to be addressed. Reintegration programmes will need to prioritize access to property in general, and access to land ownership in particular. Here the revision of discriminatory laws against women that hinder access to land, property and inheritance should be part of reintegration strategies.

#### ***IV. 6. Support for rebuilding and socio-economic recovery***

In his sixth report on ONUB, the UN Secretary General recalls the Burundian government's priorities for 2006: economic recovery, reconstruction, reconciliation and good governance.<sup>45</sup> The government's Emergency and Transition Programme targets the needs of people affected by

<sup>44</sup> Op. cit., pp. 24-25.

<sup>45</sup> Op. cit., paragraph 40.



drought, education and health services, the return and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced people, and capacity-building in the judiciary and security sectors.

The same report reveals that a total of \$170 million was promised by international donors during a recent Forum on Peacebuilding and Development. However, the 2006 budget approved by Parliament requires \$417 million and the government estimates that \$341 million will need to come from outside sources.

Canada has supported rehabilitation mainly through regional humanitarian assistance programmes. However, Burundi has entered a most critical phase – the post-conflict transition phase. The UNDP's 2005 human development index puts Burundi in the 169<sup>th</sup> place over 177 countries. Such a high level of poverty could very well generate social tensions and further indicates a high level of state fragility to deliver basic needs.

Poverty also disproportionately affects women. According to the National Human Development Report for 2003, the maternal mortality rate is 800 for 100,000 births, twice the global average which is 430 deaths for every 100,000 births. The education gap between girls and boys is 16.5 points, while illiteracy affects 68.6% of women, compared to 42.3% of men.

The Burundian political crisis has destroyed the social and economic fabric of the country. War has exacerbated women's and girls' vulnerability to poverty, violence and HIV/AIDS and has highlighted the new phenomena of child/orphan-headed households. The majority of the young heads of households aged from 7 to 14 years are girls. Similarly, it is estimated that 22% of households are headed by women who, for the most part, live below the poverty line.<sup>46</sup>

The Transition and Emergency Programme adopted by the government cannot succeed without strong support from the international community. This support must target poverty and national reconciliation, two objectives whose success will be measured in the light of their sensitivity to gender equality.

## ***V. Canadian Action Plan to Advance Resolution 1325 in the Great Lakes Region***

In October 2005, the Department of Foreign Affairs hosted the Third Annual Symposium on Women, Peace and Security.<sup>47</sup> Participants were invited to draft recommendations to guide the development of Canada's National Action Plan (NAP) on Resolution 1325.

The Third Annual Symposium emphasized the need for political dialogue between government, civil society and academics in developing Canada's NAP. It was further recommended that the NAP "provide strategic directions and guidelines for specific regions and serve as a tool for geographic working-level officers in government departments."<sup>48</sup> One of the findings from the symposium is the need for regional research. This study is one example.

In accordance with the mandate of the Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group, this study proposes a *regional action plan*, based on two major components: priority issues facing women

<sup>46</sup> Ministry for Social Action and for the Advancement of Women.

<sup>47</sup> Foreign Affairs Canada, *Towards a Canadian National Action Plan to Implement Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security* (October 2005).

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3

during transitions to peace in Burundi and the DRC; and strategies aimed at strengthening Canada's contribution to the implementation of Resolution 1325 in the Great Lakes Region.

### ***V. 1. Priority issues for the next five years***

#### *Leadership and Participation*

Given the recent gains women have made in securing decision-making positions in Burundi, and hopefully in the DRC as well, it is a critical time to support women's leadership through capacity strengthening. Experience in leadership, negotiation and advocacy would enable greater involvement of women in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, reconstruction and of particular importance, in the emerging truth and reconciliation commissions in both the DRC and Burundi. To this end, on-going capacity strengthening for newly-elected female parliamentarians, government officials and female leaders amongst civil society organizations, including representation from community groups would be valuable. Partnerships across the region between female parliamentarians, government officials and civil society women's organizations are also encouraged. Reinforcing the leadership capacity of women should be considered an early strategy to advance gender equality and women's rights for future elections.

#### *Protection for uniquely vulnerable girls and women*

The pervasiveness of violence against women in war and in the post-conflict context necessitates increased protection strategies to prevent and respond to sexual and gender-based violence throughout private and public spheres. Explicit attention should be paid to particularly vulnerable categories of women and girls, including refugees and the displaced, widows, victims of sexual and gender-based violence, women associated with fighting forces, ex-combatants who have unacknowledged children and girls who are heads of households. To this end, promotion and protection of the rights of repatriated women and women returnees, especially regarding access to land, property and inheritance is critical to elevating the status of women, which has been recognized as key to eliminating violence against women. As such, reforms need to be designed which link poverty reduction with elevating the status of women and eliminating violence against women.

#### *Reinforcing national capacities to carry through institutional reforms*

A sustainable peace in the DRC and Burundi will be contingent upon national capacities to implement agreements, monitor abuses and transform institutions to respond to the needs of all segments of society. National structures responsible for the advancement of women operate on meagre budgets and yet are responsible for overseeing the gender components of numerous sectors. Ministries for the advancement of women, along with other critical sectors such as the gender components of commissions responsible for the reintegration of uprooted persons, national programmes for the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, land claim commissions and security and judiciary sectors, are critical to the empowerment of women in the transition phase. These elements require further support with particular attention to technical capacity to undertake gender-based analysis and formulate gender-responsive programming/planning, apply the commitments in Resolution 1325 across sectors in policies and programming and ensure effective implementation of such programming to advance gender equality.

## *V. 2. Strategic directions to strengthen Canada's contribution*

Before proposing strategic directions, it would be useful to briefly examine **challenges and lessons learned** thus far in Canada's contribution to implementation of Resolution 1325 in the Great Lakes Region:

- There are a multitude of Canadian actors who, through initiatives and projects in the Great Lakes Region, help to advance the rights of women and girls. However, Canada's initiatives in favour of women, peace and security are so scattered that it is difficult to assess their impact.
- There exists Canadian expertise in gender equality which could be highly beneficial if used to build national capacities in the Great Lakes Region. However, political will is required on the part of government to use Canada's expertise on gender, peace and security in a strategic manner.
- Little Canadian research has been conducted in Burundi or in the Democratic Republic of Congo to study the most important issues connected to peace and security from women's perspectives. This type of focused and applied research is integral to the effectiveness of Canadian programming.
- The allocation of financial resources shows that Canada's contribution to the implementation of Resolution 1325 in Burundi and in the DRC is mostly channelled through multilateral programs that receive the greater portion of Canadian aid. While the approval process for these programmes is generally governed by Canadian and U.N. policies relating to gender equality, neither Canada nor any other donor country can interfere in the administration of funds provided to multilateral agencies. This implies that monitoring the implementation of Resolution 1325 through multilateral peace and reconstruction programs is based on good faith. Moreover, multilateral channels make it difficult to establish mechanisms to monitor and assess the true technical and political capacity of multilateral agencies in implementing Resolution 1325 and advancing gender equality.
- Although Canada's initiatives have contributed to the advancement of women through the peace processes in the Great Lakes Region, it is not clear whether Resolution 1325 has been systematically used as an operational tool.
- Regional disparities in these two countries and the various degrees of impact that the conflicts have had on civilian populations call for the decentralisation of the national structures responsible for the advancement of women. For example, Eastern Congo has been particularly affected by war. Yet, the seats of all the U.N. agencies are located in Kinshasa. This does a great disservice to the people of the Eastern region because operational capacity to support gender equality and protect women's rights is likely to diminish proportionally to the distance from the capital.

### *V. 2. 1. Strengthening Canadian capacities and partnerships on Resolution 1325*

In view of the challenges identified in the previous paragraphs, the first step to strengthening implementation of Resolution 1325 is to strengthen Canadian partnerships and capacity. To do so, the following actions are recommended:

- **Establish a national mechanism to bring together NGOs, academics and members of civil society working on the issue of women, peace and security in the Great Lakes Region.** The mandate of this mechanism should be to ensure that the actions of

the Canadian government, NGOs and civil society take into account the issue of gender equality. The Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group could be responsible for this mandate.

- **Initiate a consultative process between Canadian civil society and the Inter-Departmental Working Group on Resolution 1325.** Such a process could facilitate dialogue between the two and this dialogue should lead to the development of a sub-regional plan and to the periodic evaluation of Canadian achievements.
- **Create a Canadian structure/mechanism responsible for tracking and compiling data, and centralizing documents on Canadian achievements in relation to Resolution 1325.** This structure could monitor the implementation and performance of Canada's National Action Plan on 1325 in relation to its established goals and objectives. This resource should also document lessons learned and suggest to government courses of action designed to improve the Canadian contributions to advance Resolution 1325 in specific contexts.
- **Make good use of Canadian expertise in the area of gender, peace and security.** This could mean creating thematic synergies between Canadian research centres and institutes, international development NGOs, and centres promoting human rights. Such synergies could result in:
  - the creation of a joint research programme on selected thematic issues (e.g., GPWG/North-South Institute/IDRC/Rights and Democracy);
  - the development of a joint action plan to strengthen the capacities of women's networks in the Great Lakes Region (Table de concertation sur la Région des Grands Lacs/Rights and Democracy/GPWG);
  - the joint identification of training needs for peace operations, humanitarian assistance, government structures and women's groups;
  - the development of a concerted response for training and capacity-building in key areas such as the reform of the judiciary and security, reintegration and prevention of gender-based violence.
- **Develop a Canadian strategy to respond regionally to the problem of sexual violence.** This strategy should be based on the specific characteristics of the political context in this region, on the holistic analysis of human security and on the ability to mainstream this issue into all the peace and reconstruction programmes.
- **Mobilize Canadian public opinion in favour of greater participation by Canada.** This mobilization implies the development of a communications strategy which should, among other things, highlight women's special contribution to peace building and the need for increased support to women during the reconciliation and reconstruction process in the Great Lakes Region.

### *V. 2. 2. Participating actively in the reform process and building national capacities*

The second strategic action should consist in participating more actively and more directly in the institutional reform process, and in strengthening national capacities within government as well as women's groups. The following actions are therefore recommended:

- **Identify the needs, in each country, with regards to training and technical capacities to advance the commitments in Resolution 1325** of the government, of civil society and of women's groups.

- **Support current institutional reforms by participating actively in gender capacity-building** through targeted training and technical assistance initiatives.
- **Support the institutional mechanisms put in place by national governments to promote women's rights** (Ministry of Women's Affairs, National Gender Policy, National Action Plan for Women and policies against gender-based violence).
- **Identify targeted research likely to support the implementation of Resolution 1325**, for example, dealing with: the reduction of small arms; the demilitarization and the impact of these operations on women's security; the nationality of children fathered by foreign soldiers; access to land ownership for widows and women in the process of reintegration; determining the type of justice applied for gender-based crimes – restorative justice, distributive justice – and the right to compensation; development of a regional and/or national approach to identify ex-combatant girls and define possible strategies to allow a better delivery of services to which they are entitled.
- **Design a programme to help women decision-makers improve their leadership capacities to advocate more effectively for women's agendas.** This programme could target female parliamentarians, ministers, public service officials, civil society networks or associations and professional associations such as associations of women lawyers.
- **Develop a special programme to support rural women organizations.** This programme would, for example, encourage the participation of these groups in community development projects, strengthen community structures such as cooperatives, improve agricultural production techniques and enhance access to basic services, especially literacy, reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention, and equitable access to HIV/AIDS treatment.

### *V. 2. 3. Assisting multilateral agencies, peace operations and humanitarian initiatives in operationalizing gender equality*

This study has identified the difficulty for donor countries such as Canada to ensure that funds allocated to multilateral projects and programmes have been managed in compliance with the principle of gender equality generally, and Resolution 1325 more specifically. Indeed, although many agencies and peace missions have set up gender units and appointed gender equality advisors, it is still difficult to ensure their effectiveness in proportion to the needs on the ground. One of the key problems is the under-funding of gender units and the lack of political influence exercised by gender advisors. The third strategic action should therefore focus on finding ways to improve the operationalization of gender equality without violating the non-interference principle that governs all subsidies allocated to multilateral agencies. It is recommended that the Canadian government:

- **Participate actively in gender equality training programmes** offered to humanitarian and military personnel deployed in Burundi and the DRC;
- **Increase its technical assistance to peace operations and humanitarian initiatives.** The more Canada deploys troops and experts in these missions, the more it will be able to influence the operationalization of gender equality;
- **Participate in advisory committees on multilateral programmes managed in the Great Lakes Region.** This involvement could be an excellent means of advocating for gender equality;

- **Advocate for the creation of "Gender Units", for the allocation of sufficient resources to these units, and for giving them as much political power as other units within the agencies;**
- **Encourage the importance of decentralizing multilateral and national structures responsible for post-conflict assistance.** It is fundamental the allocation of resources, human, technical and financial, are based in the areas/zones particularly affected by conflict; and
- **Support UNIFEM's regional plan for peace and security.**

## *VI. Conclusion*

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security is an advocacy tool whose success depends on the ability to place gender equality at the heart of all constitutional and institutional reforms undertaken as part of peace and reconstruction processes. Far from being limited to intentions alone, **Resolution 1325 challenges us to take into consideration the interconnectedness of all initiatives in the areas of peace, security and development from the point of view of gender equality and women's rights. Its implementation, as well as its success, closely depends on the policies and practices that govern international cooperation.**

Canadian policy in matters of international cooperation is based on the selection of a core group of beneficiary countries. These countries are selected on the basis of their ability to make efficient use of aid or because of geo-strategic considerations. The selective approach is rooted in an effort to promote good governance by encouraging the "good students." However, such an approach also raises other equally important questions having to do more specifically with the purpose of aid and the concept of international solidarity and the risk that Canada's solidarity will vary depending on the country. Canadian assistance for peace and reconstruction initiatives should be allocated in keeping with the principles of equity and proportionality according to the greatest need.

To assess Canada's support for the implementation of Resolution 1325, a Canadian policy or action plan designed for this purpose is required. It is not the intent of this report to impose Resolution 1325 as the only operational tool for the promotion of women and girls. Our purpose is to call attention to the outstanding features of this resolution. Not only does Resolution 1325 approach the transition phase from a multidimensional perspective, but it also offers the possibility of advocating for the advancement of women based on concrete and measurable objectives and targets. The international cooperation experience with Burundi and the DRC shows that there is still much to accomplish if Resolution 1325 is to be used systematically as a tool for women's advancement. Canada's contribution, whether channelled through multilateral, bilateral or voluntary sector agencies, would be enhanced if Resolution 1325 was used as an operational framework.

**While armed conflicts have particularly adverse effects on women, they also paradoxically provide an opportunity to recognize the important contributions of women to the social and economic development of their communities.** Years of civil war in Burundi and the DRC have indeed made us aware of the extent of social change brought about by the war. More than ever, women have demonstrated their ability to support social cohesion and the survival of their families.

Recognition of the significant constitutional gains made by Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo should not, however, make us forget the wide disparity between men and women in key areas such as education, health, control of and access to resources, access to economic inputs and participation and decision-making.

Important issues such as civilian protection, the return and resettlement of refugees and internally displaced persons, economic recovery, national reconciliation, the establishment of the rule of law through institutional reform, control and reduction of small arms, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, the establishment of new democratic governance structures, etc., constitute priority areas for both countries. These issues must be examined from a gender perspective and dealt with in a manner that quite clearly promotes women's advancement.

Building national capacity, within government as well as civil society and women's groups, is a big challenge for international cooperation and solidarity. Indeed, it is during the transition period, where international aid and attention usually decrease, that countries are the most vulnerable and in need of support.

Encouraging signs should not detract from the fact that Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo remain essentially vulnerable and fragile states characterized by extreme poverty, the destruction of the social fabric and weak rule of law. Efforts made thus far need to be reinforced and the advancement of women should, more than ever, receive special attention so that women's gains are no longer tied to the transition period but move into longer-term reforms in development and democratic governance. Hence, challenges remain and Canada is invited to rise to these challenges.

## Appendices

### *Appendix A: Channels of Canadian cooperation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)*

#### Bilateral channel

On its website, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) states that the protection of vulnerable populations, gender equality, capacity-building and the protection of the environment are mainstreamed into all the activities funded by CIDA in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In addition, CIDA subscribes to the principle of gender equality, in compliance with its own policy and with Canada's International Policy Statement. The latter, in the section on Development, defines two strategic focuses, one of which is greater sectoral focus based on *ensuring gender equality*.

The bilateral cooperation programme with the Democratic Republic of the Congo is estimated at more than \$50 million (Cdn).<sup>49</sup> Managed by the Canadian International Development Agency and executed by Canadian NGOs, the programme includes five projects totalling \$19.6 million (Cdn):<sup>50</sup>

- Support for Democracy Project;
- Strengthening Financial Services Adapted to Women's Needs Project;
- Rehabilitation of Community Health Services in the Health Zones of Kinshasa Province;
- Mayumbe Rural Development Project;
- Central Bank of Congo Capacity-Building Project.

Two of these projects are of special interest in terms of their focus on women. In a country where banking infrastructure and the financial system are practically non-existent, and where it is very difficult for women to access micro-credit and protect their assets, the project for Strengthening Financial Services Adapted to Women's Needs takes on crucial importance. As well, the Support for Democracy Project deserves to be mentioned: the objective of this project is to increase men's and women's involvement in public affairs and it targets the promotion of women's rights specifically.

#### Multilateral channel

Through CIDA, Canada supports a number of initiatives and programmes under the aegis of the UN in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. These multilateral programmes are of critical importance considering the immense challenges in the areas of peace, security and rehabilitation.

The most important initiatives are as follows:

- The United Nations Mission in the DRC (MONUC) to which Canada has allocated CAN\$162,875,321 between 2000-2001;
- Humanitarian aid to which Canada has contributed up to CAN\$4 million;

<sup>49</sup> Information provided on Foreign Affairs Canada's Web Site:

<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/africa/rdc-Canada-fr.asp>.

<sup>50</sup> This sum was calculated by adding the amounts allocated to each project. For more details, visit the Web site of the Canadian Embassy in the DRC:

<http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/world/embassies/DRC>



- the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP) to which Canada has allocated \$15 million (Cdn) (this programme covers nine countries altogether);
- the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region;
- the Project for the Support to the Electoral Process coordinated by UNDP;
- the Project Against Sexual Violence coordinated by the United Nations Population Fund and to which Canada has contributed \$15 million over four years. This initiative is to be commended since it deals with the problem of extreme violence and cruelty whose level, scope and consequences on women and their communities have greatly disturbed the collective psyche.

The above mentioned institutions are responsible for the management of UN multilateral programmes in the DRC and subscribe to gender equity and equality in compliance with UN and Canadian policies. They include Gender Units that are responsible for ensuring the integration of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue as well as for promoting projects specifically in favour of the advancement of women. With respect to Canadian gender equality policy, we can therefore say that, in principle, gender as a cross-cutting issue determines the funding of multilateral programmes by Canada.

Canada's participation to peace and security operations conducted in the DRC should also be noted. According to the Department of Foreign Affairs' website,<sup>51</sup> **eight** high-ranking military officers have been deployed to MONUC and **one** Royal Canadian Mounted Police has been part of the Civilian Police Mission since May 2005. To help measure the impact of the Canadian contribution, it is useful to note that there are **18,000** peacekeepers in the ranks of the MONUC. Finally, in summer 2003, Canada participated in the Interim Multinational Peacekeeping Force in Bunia. The goal of this Force was to re-establish order in Ituri District which was the scene of bloody conflict. Canada deployed two Hercules transports and 60 military logisticians.

#### Voluntary sector and partnership with Canadian NGOs

Many Canadian NGOs work in the DRC. Most of them are members of the Table de concertation pour la Région des Grands Lacs coordinated by Entraide Missionnaire. Having been involved in the region for a long time, they have made an important contribution to the grassroots movement in general and to the women's movement in particular.

Two of the projects which are of particular interest have been managed respectively by Development and Peace and the Centre canadien d'étude et de coopération internationale (CECI). Through the Action Citoyenne pour la Paix (ACIPA) Project, which concluded in February 2006 and was managed by CECI, Congolese women as well as women from the Great Lakes Region have been able to enter into a dialogue on the challenges of peace from a women's perspective. The ACIPA Project supported the *Comité d'action pour le développement intégral* (CADI) based in South Kivu. Through CADI, women from this district were able to develop their capacity; increase their commitment vis-à-vis self-advancement; develop advocacy strategies on crucial issues such as violence against women, access to justice, conflict resolution, etc.; and create genuine possibilities for women's leadership. Similarly, the Support for Democracy Project undertaken by Development and Peace set out to increase the participation of Congolese women in the political, economic and socio-cultural life of their country.

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid, p. 3

The work of Rights and Democracy in the Democratic Republic of the Congo should also be highlighted, especially as it concerns access to justice for the victims of gender-based violence and to participation and decision-making. Rights and Democracy has funded a project designed to help women of the Congo's civil society reclaim ownership of Resolution 1325. The project has helped to create regional synergies and women have been able to define common issues which should also guide the application of Resolution 1325. Rights and Democracy has also supported the participation of women in the Inter-Congolese Dialogue.

### *Appendix B: Channels of Canadian cooperation in Burundi*

#### Multilateral channel

Through CIDA, Canada supports a number of initiatives and programmes under the aegis of the UN in Burundi. For the most part, these multilateral programmes are regionally-based and focus on humanitarian assistance and the issues of peace, security and human rights.

Just as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the multilateral channels which Canada uses to support the transition period in Burundi must be examined taking into account three factors. First, the UN agencies through which Canada allocates its contribution must in principle respect Canadian and UN policy as concerns gender equality.

Secondly, even if Canada cannot interfere in the administration of the funds it provides to multilateral programmes, partnership protocols nevertheless must be consistent with Canadian norms and principles, including gender equality.

Thirdly, Canada's involvement in the advisory committees of some projects and programmes such as the MDRP, allows CIDA to monitor the implementation of gender equality. Furthermore, it is important to note that in demobilization and reintegration programmes in Burundi, Rwanda and the DRC, CIDA calls upon the services of local consultants. These consultants participate in national meetings and joint missions and provide comments to CIDA who then uses them at the meetings of the advisory committee.

Through multilateral channels, Canada is involved in the following programmes and operations:

- **United Nations Mission to Burundi (ONUB):** Up to now, Canada's contribution is estimated at \$13 million (US).<sup>52</sup> However, it is important to note that Canada has not provided military or police personnel to ONUB.
- **Humanitarian Assistance** under two main programmes: the International Humanitarian Assistance Programme (AHI Programme) and the Programme Against Hunger, Malnutrition and Disease (PAHMD).
- For the year 2004-2005, the AHI Programme and the PAHMD have allocated:
  - \$600,000 to a project implemented by Médecins Sans Frontières in the province of Ruyigi;
  - \$2,300,000 to the ICRC for its activities in the Great Lakes Region;
  - \$1,600,000 to OCHA for its 2005 activities in Africa;
  - \$2,000,000 to the UNHCR for its activities in the Great Lakes Region;
  - \$3,000,000 to the UNHCR for the repatriation of Burundian refugees in 2005 and 2006;
  - \$3,500,000 to the World Hunger Programme for its activities in the Great Lakes Region.

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<sup>52</sup> Information provided on Foreign Affairs Canada's website.

- **Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP):** Canada participates in the National Demobilization and Reintegration Programme for ex-combatants through the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP). Canada contributes \$15 million spread over four years to the trust fund managed by the World Bank which benefits nine countries of the sub-region, including Burundi.
- **Landmines:** The Canadian Landmines Fund has supported Handicap International's programme designed to assist landmine victims and provide mine-risk education in the Eastern provinces. In 2006, Canada contributed \$150,000.
- **Human rights and judicial reform:** In 2005, the Canadian Peacebuilding Fund provided \$600,000 to support the activities of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in the area of national capacity-building: judicial system, justice administration, human rights protection, especially the rights of people affected by sexual or gender-based violence.

#### Voluntary sector and partnership with Canadian NGOs

Many Canadian NGOs operate in Burundi. Some of them are members of the Table de concertation pour la Région des Grands Lacs coordinated by Entraide Missionnaire. Through their partnership with Burundian civil society organizations, Canadian NGOs have contributed to peace promotion, democracy, community development and human rights. From this point of view, they have helped to strengthen the women's movement and promote women's rights.

Two of the projects more particularly deserve our attention. They are managed respectively by the Centre d'étude et de coopération internationale (CECI) and Defence for Children International-Canada (DCI) in partnership with War Child Canada (WCC).

Through the *Action Citoyenne pour la Paix* (ACIPA) Project managed by CECI, support was provided to the Réseau Femmes et Paix (RFP). Burundian women who belonged to this association were thus able to create a forum for dialogue, networking, solidarity and capacity-building. Having become a cooperation mechanism on the issues of peace, justice and participation, recognized both by civil society and political circles, the RFP has therefore gained political leverage and contributed to enhancing the participation and representation of women in the general elections which took place in June and August 2005.

Furthermore, thanks to the Canada Fund for Africa, Defence for Children International-Canada (DCI) and War Child Canada (WCC) received funding to support girls who have been victims of war and survivors of sexual violence. Launched in the summer of 2005, the *Support for Young Female Victims of Violence* project directly targets 300 girls; however, the advocacy and mobilization campaign hopes to reach between 4,000 and 5,000 young women. There are three components to the project: 1) direct support for victims: psychosocial assistance, legal support and socio-economic assistance through income-generating activities; 2) public awareness and advocacy on the issue of gender and violence prevention; 3) dialogue with government on national policies pertaining to gender equality matters. The project engages four partners: l'Association des Femmes Juristes, l'Association pour la Promotion de la Fille Burundaise, l'Association des Guides, et l'Association Burundaise pour le Bien-être de la Famille (ABUBEF).<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Association of Women Lawyers, Association for the Promotion of Burundi Girls, Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, and the Burundi Association for the Well-Being of the Family.

### *About the Gender and Peacebuilding Working Group (GPWG)*

The GPWG is a working group of the CPCC, and functions as a network designed to strengthen collaboration among Canadian organizations, activists and academics by providing a forum for the exchange of resources, facilitating dialogue and engaging in policy analysis and development. The advancement of gender equality and women's rights in peacebuilding policies, programs and practices is the principle purpose of the working group.

The mandate of the working group is to strengthen the capacities of members and other organizations and encourage collaboration amongst stakeholders from academia, NGOs, activists, and others active in peace and security to engage in dialogue with counterparts from government on Canada's international policies as they relate to gender, peace and security.

The working group organizes seminars, facilitates dialogue, produces educational material and research publications, and develops policy recommendations for civil society, government, and multilateral organizations regarding the challenge of advancing women's rights and gender equality in the context of conflict and post-conflict transitions. It is important to underline that the working group attaches equal importance to girls and adolescents affected by conflict.

In summary, the GPWG engages in the following activities:

- Raise public awareness about the challenges faced by girls and women in peace, security and reconstruction processes;
- Build political support for the contribution women make to building peace and encourage their equitable and effective participation and integration into national, regional and international fora;
- Advocate for the integration of a gender perspective in Canada's foreign policy agenda, particularly in conflict prevention, human security, peacebuilding, negotiations and post-conflict reconstruction policies and programs; and
- Engage and maintain dialogue with members of parliament, government officials and civil society on Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

For more information please contact:  
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### *About the Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC)*

The Canadian Peacebuilding Coordinating Committee (CPCC) is a member based network of Canadian based organizations and individuals actively involved in peacebuilding practice and policy development. Our goal is to engender greater coherence and effectiveness in building peace through fostering collaboration and coordination among diverse stakeholders in Canada, and partners overseas.

Objectives of the CPCC are to:

1. To enable engagement with diverse Canadian civil society actors involved in peacebuilding and facilitate systematic and strategic learning on peacebuilding through shared analysis;
2. To enable the engagement of the Canadian non-governmental community with government and multilateral agencies to contribute to policy development, to enhance coordination of programs, and to promote peacebuilding as an important instrument of Canadian and multilateral foreign and development policies;
3. To enhance dialogue on peacebuilding with partners in the South and North towards development of common interests and approaches to peacebuilding;
4. To expand the network of organizations committed to a peacebuilding ethic and contribute to the building and maintenance of Canadian public support for peacebuilding.

Canadian organizations or individual involved in the peacebuilding community, and who agree with our goal and objectives, are welcome to become participants in the network. For more information please contact: [info@peacebuild.ca](mailto:info@peacebuild.ca).