



WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM, U.S. STATEMENT ON U.S. SCR 1325 NATIONAL ACTION PLAN

Executive Summary

The UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325 (SCR 1325) unanimously in October 2000 in recognition of the importance of including women in matters of peace and security. Its basic premise is that a just and lasting world peace cannot be achieved without the full and equal participation of women. Broadly applied, Resolution 1325 extends to all stages of peace building, peacemaking, peacekeeping and conflict prevention. SCR 1325 has been reinforced and expanded by follow-up Security Council Resolutions: 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), and 1960 (2010) that discuss sexual violence, women in conflict, and women's participation in government and peace processes. SCR 1325 combined with its follow up resolutions form the Women, Peace and Security policy agenda (WPS).

Internal implementation is key to realizing the goals and spirit of SCR 1325. Recognizing this, the Security Council called on all UN Member States to develop national action plans (NAPs) to ensure domestic applications of SCR 1325 within each country. As a permanent member of the Security Council, the U.S. is an important player in the development of global policy on Women, Peace and Security. Under its Security Council Presidency, the U.S. presented three of the four follow up resolutions to SCR 1325, exemplifying its active participation in the establishment of the WPS.¹ Additionally, the U.S. has unique responsibility and opportunities to provide leadership on SCR 1325 implementation as a major donor to conflict-affected countries, as a contributor of armed forces to conflict settings, and as a mediator and stakeholder in a variety of peace processes.

At the international level, there are a number of systems currently being developed to monitor implementation of SCR 1325, including a set of 26 global indicators that will be used to track the results of efforts to engage women in participating in peace talks, building security, and promoting recovery. Examples of these indicators include: prevalence of sexual violence, women's political participation in parliaments and ministerial positions, and index of women's and girls' physical security and maternal mortality rate. A ten-year strategic framework to guide the UN's implementation of SCR 1325 has also been outlined.

On October 26, 2010 - the 10th Anniversary of SCR 1325 - U.S. Secretary of the State Hillary Rodham Clinton announced her commitment to developing a U.S. 1325 national action plan (NAP), including the 26 global indicators. To ensure that the U.S. 1325 National Action Plan (NAP) adheres to the fundamental goals of SCR 1325—as means for preventing and resolving armed conflict and establishing sustainable peace through the increased status and participation of women—this paper calls for: ***(i.) a human security framework; (ii.) an internal/domestic and external application of SCR 1325; and (iii.) civil society consultation during the development and implementation of the NAP.*** This paper explores how: An *internal* and *external* framework, inclusion of civil society participation, and U.S. domestic application of SCR 1325 is necessary to realizing the full transformation potential of the Women, Peace and Security agenda.

U.S. SCR 1325 NAP: An Internal and External Framework.

The U.S. SCR 1325 NAP must include both an *internal* and *external* framework in its application. An *internal* framework focuses on the domestic application of SCR 1325 to advance

¹ S/RES/1820 (2008), S/RES/1888 (2009), and S/RES/1960 (2010).

the status of women and girls for peace and security within U.S. borders. An *external* framework seeks to address the impact of U.S. foreign policy decisions on women and girls in areas of armed conflict. SCR 1325 and the global indicators do not distinguish between a developed, occupier nation and one that is developing and/or occupied: both are equally considered countries in conflict.

Emerging Best Practices for SCR 1325 NAPs: The Role of Civil Society

In accordance with SCR 1325 and its follow-up resolutions, developers of the U.S. 1325 NAP must engage civil society women’s organizations and partners in its creation and implementation. The inclusion of civil society – particularly women’s organizations and organizations working on human rights and peace issues – ensures both that women’s priorities and perspectives are reflected in the final plan, and that the NAP will be effectively implemented because the NAP will be based on the actual needs of U.S. society.

Domestic Applications of the U.S. SCR 1325 NAP.

In broad terms, domestic applications of SCR 1325 in the U.S. can include an emphasis on:

- A. *Women as Agents of Change and Leadership:* The U.S. lags behind the world average for women’s political participation (16.7 percent in the U.S. compared with 19.5 percent worldwide and 27.7 percent in Afghanistan and 25.2 percent in Iraq). The U.S. 1325 NAP must create opportunities to recruit and retain women seeking to serve in elective office or in security and police forces.
- B. *An International and Human Rights Legal Framework:* The U.S. SCR 1325 NAP must recognize domestic policy applications of compliance with international treaties and human rights conventions, as well as the foreign policy implications.
- C. *A Human Security Approach:* A “Human Security” approach, that defines security as freedom from basic insecurities based on minimum core aspects of human rights and human development, such as the right to engage meaningfully in political processes and to have access to social services such as education, justice and health, should be applied as a means for framing the development of a U.S. SCR 1325 NAP.
- D. *Rethinking the Military-Industrial Complex—Weapons Proliferation, International Arms Trade and an Overburdened National Budget:* The U.S. supplies arms or military technology to more than 92 percent of the conflicts under way. The costs to the families and communities afflicted by this violence are immeasurable; the costs of attempting to repair the damage caused by this violence drains public sector resources that could be better spent for education and other services that would serve proactively to prevent armed conflict.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A U.S. SCR 1325 NAP can and should make a difference in the lives of women around the world, including women in the U.S. itself. The process of creating a National Action Plan offers our government an unparalleled opportunity for raising awareness among its population about the relationships among women, peace and security and enlist civil society partners in realizing a foreign policy agenda based on principles of human security.