

# for women's organizations

# OPTIONS FOR ACTION

to increase women's participation and strengthen women's security in conflict and post conflict countries

## The Conference "Security on the Ground - realising Resolution 1325"

was held in Stockholm (Sweden), 16 – 18 November 2011. The aim of the conference was to let Swedish peace mission personnel with experience from security sector reform (SSR) missions, and local civil society organisations from conflict and post conflict countries, collaborate in developing practical tools for working together more actively in SSR to implement Resolution 1325. The conference was built on the participants' sharing of expectations, experiences and needs. Below is a short summary of the main presentations and concepts as well as the participant's conclusions of action points for women organisations presented at the conference.

## Resolution 1325 and security sector reform (ssr)

The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 On Women, Peace and Security (resolution 1325), which the UN Security Council adopted in October 2000, is the first resolution ever passed by the Security Council that specifically addresses the impact of war on women and the importance of women's contributions to conflict resolution and sustainable peace. The resolution focuses on the fact that women should have more influence and that they should actively participate when conflicts are prevented and when societies are rebuilt after war and conflict. Resolution 1325 lifts women as central actors for sustainable peace and security. At the same time it recognises that women are particularly vulnerable in

conflict, for instance because sexual violence is used against women as a weapon of war. The resolution also stresses that sustainable peace is impossible without women's participation. Resolution 1325 is binding on Member States.

The rule of law together with a functioning security sector has been identified as important building blocks for creating sustainable democracy and peace. The objective of SSR is to reform security institutions to be effective, accountable and affordable. SSR widens the security concept from the narrow focus on military security. It also includes political and economic security, as well as security for the individual, i.e. human security. A nation's security requires that both men's and women's skills are used to create, define and maintain this security.

## Broaden Security analysis

Security analysis based on the needs and concerns of a both women and men is also essential to achieve lasting effects. Women's participation in all aspects of peace building is therefore a prerequisite for a comprehensive security analysis and lasting peace and democracy.

The links between security and legal sectors and Resolution 1325 are many. In the legislative area it includes, for example, review of national legislation and it's harmonisation with international law; that men and women have equal rights to own and inherit land; the right to divorce; and that all violence is criminalised, including when the perpetrator is a close relative. With regard to institutional reform, it refers to physical changes such as separate jails for men and women. It's also about structural and

**"Resolution 1325 states the need to change the perception of women, peace and security and is binding on Member States."**

capacity-building efforts such as education, vetting, implementation of codes of conduct and practical steps to recruit both men and women.

Peacebuilding in security and justice sectors is still managed largely without resolution 1325 as an integral part of the reform program, although some improvements have been made since Resolution 1325 was adopted. Lack of consultation by women, lack of recruitment of women and a lack of gender perspective in efforts are ongoing criticism directed against the security and legal sector reform in today's UN, EU or OSCE-led peace missions.

# WHAT YOU CAN DO TO GET WOMEN ON THE INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

Are you living in a conflict zone and do you work in a local women's organisation? Here are some concrete steps that you and your organisation can take to increase women's participation and to broaden international mission's security analysis to ensure that the threats to women's safety are included:

**1.**

Local organisations are valuable for the international actors who need links to and contacts with local people. Invite international actors to your organisation and present your work and concerns in a structured way. Ask the international actors what information they need.

**2.**

Raise the issue of security in your environment and collect information.

**3.**

Be visible! Make sure that it is possible to find you online, through a website or Facebook. Start a Facebook group to spread awareness and seek support.

**4.**

Be well informed and prepared to support your information with reliable sources.

**5.**

Cooperation with other women gives a stronger voice. Develop internal/local cooperation structures and networks.

**6.**

Contribute to increased education and awareness on human rights and women's right to participate and in decision making.

**7.**

Produce information such as shadow reports and provide international actors with them.