

16 October 2007

**OPEN LETTER TO UN AMBASSADORS: RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE ON
“WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY: TOWARDS A COHERENT AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY
COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325”**

Dear Ambassador,

The Security Council will hold an Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security on 23 October 2007 under the theme “Towards a Coherent and Effective Implementation of Security Council resolution 1325.” The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (NGOWG) urges you to take this opportunity to critically assess the concrete and specific efforts to implement 1325 at all levels and, in particular, the role of the Security Council in such efforts.

Much has been achieved over the last seven years in implementing SCR 1325 by Member States, civil society and the UN system – including encouraging progress reported in this year’s Report of the Secretary-General on Women, Peace and Security (S/2007/567). It is the case, however, that Member States have, year after year, recognized that the rate and means of implementation, including by the Security Council, are far from adequate.

There are many persistent challenges to implementation that require urgent attention. These range from a lack of awareness of the importance of a gender perspective to peace and security and the gender dimensions of conflict, to problems around limited capacity, resources and information provision.

One of the key challenges is that SCR 1325 has not been effectively institutionalized. The UN System-Wide Action Plan is only one part of this and Member States, in particular the Security Council, have an important role to play in addressing the accountability gap.

The Security Council currently lacks a strong accountability mechanism to drive and support effective, timely and systematic implementation. Such a mechanism would address gaps including, inconsistency in invoking SCR 1325 in the directives from the Council to the field and ensuring that they are fulfilled, and inadequate monitoring and reporting on implementation by field missions – particularly on grave violations of human rights, such as sexual violence.

This year’s Open Debate is an opportunity to drive the 1325 agenda forward – to go beyond general statements and consider how to concretely address gaps and challenges, and to build on progress achieved. The NGOWG hopes that beyond reporting on specific national efforts, you will also address the issues raised above and specifically consider:

1. **Calling on the Security Council to consider how it might provide more effective oversight on the implementation of SCR 1325, including through the establishment of a focal point or an expert-level working group with appropriate leadership to ensure its active engagement with all aspects of the work of the Council;**
2. **Calling on the Security Council to ensure the provision of thorough and accurate information on grave violations of women’s human rights and on women’s participation in peace and reconstruction processes including through:**
 - **Reiterating and building on previous requests to the Secretary-General (S/PRST/2004/40) to incorporate information on gender-based violence, women’s participation at all levels of decision making on peace and security issues, and other aspects of SCR 1325 in all reports to the Council; and**
 - **Calling for the Secretary-General to ensure that there is, in addition, comprehensive country-specific reporting on sexual violence to the Council from peace support operations;**

3. **Calling on the Security Council to consistently employ a gender perspective and a focus on women's human rights in its work on all country and region-specific situations and thematic matters by consulting with women's groups and gender experts from specialized UN entities; and**
4. **Urging the Security Council and all Member States to promote leadership for the effective implementation of 1325 by UN personnel, particularly senior personnel in UN headquarters, peace support missions and UN country-teams, including through incorporating responsibility for such implementation into terms of reference, job descriptions, work plans, and performance and incentive systems.**

The NGOWG looks forward to your engagement with the challenges of ensuring the full and rapid implementation of SCR 1325. We are confident that the above recommendations are a solid and necessary step to advancing this agenda and have included with this letter an Issue Brief with further details.

Please do not hesitate to contact us for additional information or to discuss these issues further.

Sincerely,

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HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH
FEMMES AFRICA SOLIDARITÉ
GLOBAL ACTION TO PREVENT WAR
GLOBAL JUSTICE CENTER
INTERNATIONAL ALERT
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S TRIBUNE CENTRE
UNITED METHODISTS, WOMEN'S DIVISION
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WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM

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