

The 15th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325:

UK Leadership and Commitments at the 2015 UN High Level Review

2015 is a crucial year for the issue of Women, Peace and Security. In October, the UN will celebrate the 15th anniversary of the creation of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325, which enshrined the link between women's experiences of conflict and international peace and security (and has been subsequently strengthened by six further UNSC Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security). The Security Council will convene a High Level Review to assess progress at the global, regional and national levels in implementing UNSCR 1325.

While much action on gender and conflict to date has provided a welcome spotlight on sexual violence, an **increased focus is needed on women's and adolescent girls' leadership and their right to full and equal participation in all efforts to establish peace and security, at all levels.** Such approach is critical in achieving transformative change for women and girls in fragile and conflict affected settings, and stopping violence before it starts.

We call on Her Majesty's Government (HMG), through both its own policies and international role on Women, Peace and Security, to make clear commitments and statements in support of the following three priorities at the High Level Review (HLR) on UNSCR 1325:

- 1. Support the inclusive and comprehensive implementation of the Women, Peace and Security framework, with a focus on women's and adolescent girls' participation.**
- 2. Commit new, dedicated and accessible funding for Women, Peace and Security, and better tracking of all HMG Government spend for Women, Peace and Security activities.**
- 3. Strengthen leadership and accountability for Women, Peace and Security at global, regional and at UK levels.**

In addition to the 15th anniversary of 1325, this year also marks the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action: an important blueprint for advancing women's and girls' rights. 2015 will also prove a critical year to promote gender equality across all peace and security activities including the 2015 Peacebuilding Architecture Review, the High Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations as well as the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and deliberations for the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit. Now is the time to achieve a step change for women and girls affected by conflict; recognising and elevating their role in the prevention and resolution of conflict and in building the gender-responsive institutions needed for sustainable peace.

The UK is an established global leader on Women, Peace and Security and has its permanent member status at the UN Security Council, membership of NATO, the EU, the Commonwealth, and is a leading aid donor. Following on from the UK's global leadership on the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative, and the Call to Action on Protecting Girls and Women in Emergencies, the UK

Government must now ensure it continues to galvanise global attention, resolve and funding for the issue of Women, Peace and Security.

Specifically:

1. Support the inclusive and comprehensive implementation of the Women, Peace and Security framework, with a focus on women's and adolescent girls' participation

- Champion the **importance of women's and (where appropriate) adolescent girls' participation as a follow up to the UK's leadership on ending sexual violence in conflict**. Specifically:
 - **Commit to supporting women's leadership and meaningful participation in international and regional peace and security meetings, peace negotiations and donor conferences, and associated consultations**, through UK financial and diplomatic support to women's rights organisations from conflict-affected states (women should comprise at least 30% of delegates in decision making processes). Affirm a commitment to refuse to support such meetings and negotiations which do not meaningfully include women.
 - **Pledge to ensure that UK support to the six UK NAP focus countries to develop and/or implement their own costed and funded National Action Plans will include a technical focus on creating spaces for women's full and meaningful participation in their design, ongoing review and revision**, and UK funding to facilitate such participation by local civil society organisations and women's rights groups.
- **Commit to scale up deployment of senior and operational gender advisors to UK military operations, as well as to UN missions from the outset, and integrate their advice into planning, operations, training and Military Doctrine. Advocate for reform within the UN missions** by calling for mandatory pre-deployment gender training for all peacekeepers as well as ongoing gender sensitivity training for all UN staff.
- **Call on the World Humanitarian Summit to advance gender equality and women's and girls' rights and leadership in all humanitarian action**, by calling on humanitarian agencies and sectors to prioritise gender equality and address violence against women and girls (VAWG) in all emergency and humanitarian assistance, emergency assessments and response plans.

2. Commit new, dedicated and accessible funding for Women, Peace and Security, and better tracking of all HMG Government spend for Women, Peace and Security activities.

- **Commit earmarked funding to UK Women, Peace and Security activities, with a clear and transparent budget for the four pillars of the NAP, tracked through the use of gender markers (including OCED and IASC markers). This should align with the UN target for a minimum of 15% of peacebuilding spending to be dedicated to further women's empowerment and gender equality and should include long-term funding support to women's rights organisations** through the roll out of accessible funding streams for grassroots organisations.ⁱ

- **Commit new additional UK funding to the proposed Global Acceleration Instrument for women, peace and security**, and call for the Instrument to ensure that funds reach women's rights organisations in conflict-affected countries. The UK should also advocate for women's rights organisations to be represented within the Instrument's Steering Committee, for transparency in decision-making and the rapid disbursement of funding to diverse civil society groups.
- **Provide immediate funding at the onset of an emergency for the deployment of gender based violence/ violence against women advisors and gender/GENCAP advisors** to support response efforts through the cluster system.

3. Strengthen leadership and accountability for Women, Peace and Security at global, regional and at UK levels.

- **At the global level:**
 - **Support the appointment of a high level UN post on Women Peace and Security** with a budget and powers to strengthen accountability for implementation of UNSCR 1325 from conflict prevention and resolution through to relief and recovery.
 - **Call for further action by the Security Council on Women, Peace and Security** for example by calling for the formation of a working group on Women, Peace and Security, institutionalising civil society briefings during open debates and formal meetings, and ensure that any new UN Security Council resolution agreed will be focused on implementation and accountability of Member States' Women Peace and Security commitments.
 - **Advocate for greater female leadership in the UN** by ensuring women achieve a minimum 40 percent share of senior positions by 2020, including special representatives, envoys, and heads of agencies, as well as senior roles in conflict and post conflict-related missions, building on existing UN targets
 - **Encourage other Member States to ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, with a focus on implementation of Article 7 (4)**, which requires the exporting State Party to take into account the risk of conventional arms being used to commit or facilitate serious acts of gender-based violence or serious acts of violence against women and children.
- **At the regional level, call for the appointment of an EU level regional champion on Women, Peace and Security.**
- **At the UK level:**
 - **Announce dedicated capacity for Women, Peace and Security in all UK embassies in fragile and conflict affected Countries as well as in diplomatic missions to regional and global institutions** (ie dedicated Women, Peace and Security desk officers and training programmes).
 - **Commit to ensure all FCO, DFID and MoD Ministers travelling to any fragile and conflict affected country, receive a briefing from civil society and women's groups on women, peace and security issues.**

This position has been endorsed by the following organisations:

Care International UK

Conciliation Resources

International Rescue Committee UK

International Alert

Oxfam International

Saferworld

Soroptimist UKPAC

UN WOMEN UK National Committee

WILPF

Women for Women International

Womankind

World Vision UK

ⁱ Research by the OECD shows that currently only 2% of aid from DAC donors to the peace and security sector in fragile states and economies targeted gender equality as a principal objective. The UK should work with other DAC donors to ensure that they all deliver 15% by 2020, in line with the UNSG's Women's Participation in Peacebuilding Plan. Although women's organisations in fragile states are at the frontline of efforts to tackle gender-based violence, as well as to prevent and resolve conflicts, they receive just one percent of ODA targeting gender equality (OECD).