

Civil Society Recommendations on Implementation of UNSCR 1325 in Europe

On 7 and 8 September, under the Initiative for Peacebuilding, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) and International Alert jointly organised a civil society conference on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in Europe. The conference brought together representatives of civil society organizations from across Europe - from Norway to Cyprus, and from Northern Ireland to Latvia - to share good practice and experiences of how they have advocated for SCR 1325 at the national level and, in some cases, how they have played a role in the development, implementation and monitoring of national action plans. The following list of recommendations is in two parts, with the first targeted at EU Member States on the issue of National Action Plans, and then the second part addresses the EU Institutions. These recommendations were drafted during the civil society conference, and have also benefitted from wide consultation with other civil society networks in Europe and beyond.

Recommendations with respect to National Action Plans

An important mechanism for translating SCR 1325 into reality is through the creation of National Action Plans (NAPs). Most European countries are strong supporters of the resolution, and to date, twelve plans for national-level implementation of SCR 1325 have been developed in Europe. Of these, nine are in EU Member States¹. National Action Plans can be developed in many different ways, depending on the specific national context, structures and priorities in relation to SCR 1325² that each country has, and the resources that are available for the process. However, while country contexts and governmental priorities vary, there are several core elements and underlying principles that should be incorporated into the development of all NAPs as a matter of good practice.

Core Principles

1. All NAPs should contain as standard the following **key components**: specific and realistic goals, objectives and priority actions, timelines, a budget, indicators, benchmarks and targets, and clear lines of responsibility to specific individuals, units or functions. They should also include a results-oriented and transparent reporting and monitoring mechanism, including a system for tracking funds allocated to the implementation of the action plan.
2. NAPs should reflect a **holistic consideration of women, peace and security issues**, as outlined in SCR 1325. This includes acknowledging women's role and agency in conflict and all aspects of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. Women must be supported to participate in decision-making and should not be reduced to mere victims of sexual violence. This includes a focus on **conflict prevention and civilian crisis management**, human security, and democracy and human rights.

¹ For an analysis of the different European NAPs, please see www.eplo.org/index.php?id=249

² SCR 1325 was complimented in 2008 by SCR 1820, which focuses specifically on sexual violence in conflict. SCR 1820, and any other future related Security Council resolutions should all be considered part of the body of commitments on Women, Peace and Security, and therefore assumed to be part of implementation of 1325 National Action Plans.

3. Member States should ensure that **civil society organisations (CSOs), including women's organisations**, in their own country as well as in conflict-affected countries, **are actively engaged** throughout the development, implementation, monitoring and review of NAPs.
4. The **process of developing NAPs** should be as important as the final plan itself, and any coordination or consultation mechanisms that are established in this process should be the broadest possible and sustained throughout and into the implementation phase to ensure fullest participation and engagement across stakeholders.
5. NAPs should be linked up with and **reinforce other relevant national policies** and commitments, including security, defence and development policies.

Action to Improve Specific Aspects of National-level Implementation of SCR 1325

In addition to these core elements that should underpin NAP process, we recommend that Member States take the following actions to improve specific aspects of national-level implementation of SCR 1325.

Leadership

- Provide leadership on women, peace and security issues through **strong support for the matter at the regional and international levels**, particularly within the EU and the UN. In line with current progress at the UN level, we urge member states to support the **appointment of an EU Special Representative on Women Peace and Security**, with the mandate to integrate SCR 1325 into EU common foreign and security policy, crisis management, and development cooperation, and to monitor the effective implementation, coordination and results reporting of European NAPs.
- Give women, peace and security commitments **high-level visibility and backing** by adopting champions at highest levels of national government and ensuring sufficient funds are allocated for the implementation of SCR 1325.

For example, Ireland has appointed Dame Nuala O'Loan as Ireland's Special Envoy on Resolution 1325.

- Identify and **nominate women to senior level positions** at national, regional and international level, including as EU Special Representatives, in ESDP missions and in mediation and negotiation teams.
- Commit to at least **two concrete actions** that will be undertaken by the tenth anniversary of SCR 1325 in October 2010. This could include the development of a national action plan, providing gender training to military and civilian peacekeepers, or supporting women's participation in peace processes in conflict-affected countries.

Accountability

- Undertake periodic formal **peer reviews** at the European level to monitor Member State progress and performance in the implementation of SCR 1325. This could be modelled on the OECD DAC peer review mechanism on development cooperation.
- Recommend that **CEDAW**³ incorporates women, peace and security issues into its monitoring process, so that it can monitor the extent to which the countries that report to the CEDAW Committee have implemented Women, Peace and Security commitments. The CEDAW Committee has already used its power to highlight weaknesses in the

³ The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) is a binding human rights treaty to which all EU Member States have signed up to.

implementation of women, peace and security resolutions in the past but this should be made more consistent and clearly a part of the CEDAW Committee's mandate.

- Strengthen the role of **national parliaments** in monitoring national-level implementation of resolutions 1325 and 1820. National parliaments should consider establishing a forum on women, peace and security issues.

For example, UK Associate Parliamentary Group on Women, Peace and Security brings together parliamentarians, civil servants and CSOs to monitor the implementation of the UK National Action Plan.

- Develop clear **reporting** structures with representative monitoring bodies at all levels: UN, EU, national-level, including third countries. Member states should use the 10th anniversary of SCR 1325 in October 2010 to take stock of their efforts and report formally on progress made.

For example, seventeen OSCE participating States have agreed to report on SCR 1325 through the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation's Code of Conduct in Politico-Military Aspects of Security.

- Establish a **Women, Peace and Security Task Force** with a representative from all relevant government departments and institutions responsible for implementation, reports, and monitoring and evaluation. The Task Force should meet at regular intervals and CSOs, including those from conflict-affected countries, should have the widest possible representation on it.

Monitoring

- Ensure **impact-oriented** monitoring and evaluation. This would require concrete, SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound) objectives, timelines, budgets, indicators attached to activities and outputs, and official annual reporting and review mechanisms. The plan should also indicate which units and departments are responsible for each aspect of the plans, including for the monitoring process

For example, the Austrian National Action Plan assigns responsibility; reports on status quo and includes indicators as well as a time period for each activity.

- Include **civil society organisations** in Member States and in conflict-affected countries in monitoring processes as they are an important source of information and increase the transparency and accountability of the monitoring process. Mechanisms for civil society participation in monitoring should be outlined in the NAP and institutionalised by identifying a responsible ministry/unit.

For example, *Global Monitoring Checklist by Gender Action for Peace and Security (GAPS)* includes data on indicators under 11 thematic areas for Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Nepal, Northern Ireland and Sri Lanka.

The Kosova Women's Network has tracked the implementation of SCR 1325 in its report on *Monitoring Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in Kosova*.

- Increase financial commitments to implementing Resolutions 1325 and 1820 and ensure that these **resources** are easily trackable so that changes in financial allocations can be monitored. Specific mention of budget lines and allocation of financial resources should be made in the NAP as well as in follow-up reports.

Partnership and Consultation

- Involve **civil society actors** at all levels in both EU and third countries during the development, implementation and monitoring of NAPs. Sharing information with and consulting CSOs in conflict-affected countries prioritised for action would ensure relevance of the action plan and support stronger monitoring processes. It is important to provide

specific funds to support the participation of women from conflict-affected countries in European NAP processes.

- Consider forming partnerships with **conflict-affected countries** to develop, implement and monitor NAPs, with the full inclusion and consultation of civil society organisations in the conflict-affected country as well as the EU member state. Among others this allows the participating parties to strengthen their capacities through joint learning initiatives as well as potential peer review mechanisms.
- Fund **capacity building support** for women's organisations in conflict-affected countries and provide them with opportunities for networking with donors.

Recommendations for EU Institutions

The European Union institutions can also play an important role in implementing SCR 1325 in Europe, in addition to supporting individual EU MS actions. In particular, they should consider the following recommendations:

- Integrate SCR 1325 into the **country strategy papers** of MS and the EC for development cooperation in conflict and post-conflict countries with earmarked financial support to local women's organisations.
- The **European Parliament** should monitor the implementation of the *Comprehensive Approach* and the upcoming *Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action*. It can also help to ensure the implementation of the EU Guidelines on Violence Against Women and Girls.
- The European **Institute for Gender Equality** should play a role in the monitoring of implementation of SCR 1325 and 1820 at the national and EU levels, particularly through the compilation of statistics and development of indicators.
- EC delegations should share information and **consult with civil society organisations**, including local women's groups, where they are active in countries affected by conflict.
- The EU Task Force on Women, Peace and Security should actively follow up on the commitment to **develop indicators** on the protection and empowerment of women in conflict settings and post-conflict situations, as outlined in the *Comprehensive Approach*

The following organizations align themselves with these recommendations:

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