

Civil Society Advisory Group to the UN on Women, Peace, and Security

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CSAG advises the High-Level Steering Committee of the heads of UN agencies to ensure a coherent approach to implementing Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security. October 2010 marks the resolution's tenth anniversary: CSAG calls on the UN and member states to reinforce their commitment to protecting women's rights in the context of armed conflict and empowering women's full participation in all peacebuilding and reconstruction processes.

Recommendations from the Civil Society Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security on Events and Action to Commemorate the 10th Anniversary of SCR 1325

Revised and Updated Concept Note – 21 June 2010

The Civil Society Advisory Group to the UN on Women, Peace and Security (CSAG) presented recommendations in April 2010 on key events to commemorate the 10th Anniversary on UNSCR 1325, recommending three principal activities to provide the basis for high-level political attention and meaningful outcomes on women, peace and security. The purpose of this memo is to update those recommendations, providing greater specificity based on conversations with Member States, civil society and UN representatives. Moreover, as the anniversary fast approaches, CSAG urges member states and UN entities to act with urgency to ensure that the proposed key events take place and are successful in generating renewed support for achieving the goals embodied in UNSCR 1325.

I. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

1. A High-level “Commitments to Action” Event convened by the Secretary-General in September at the time of the UN General Assembly opening session

RATIONALE:

- The event will provide a forum for Member States – be they conflict-affected, traditional donors or others – to announce new commitments to results-based, time-bound and measurable action to implement aspects of the UNSCR 1325 agenda. The event will not be a General Assembly event, but will resemble a side event convened by the Secretary-General.
- The Commitments to Action event will provide high-level political attention and generate momentum towards concrete action on women, peace and security at the planned Ministerial-Level Security Council Open Debate in October.

TIMING:

- The event will occur during the opening week of the General Assembly in September in order to promote the highest level of participation from the widest representation of Member States.
- Due to the crowded agenda in September, the meeting will be short – lasting approximately two hours – and strategically-organized. It

will take place at lunchtime on Monday, September 20 or Tuesday, September 21.

COMMITMENTS:

- Consistent with the UNSCR 1325 indicators framework, the commitments will generally fall into one of four categories: participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery programs.
- Commitments will address a concrete aspect of the UNSCR 1325 agenda, and will include new policies, laws, regulations and practices to enhance participation and protection of women and create an enabling environment for new efforts; as well as increased financial resources of a stated amount over a specific timeframe, including financial support to the pilot project on global indicators. CSAG is preparing a menu of commitments to assist member states in determining the types of commitments they can make. Some examples are as follows:
 - i. Country A will contribute \$20 million in FY 2011 to a fund providing grants to local women's and civil society organizations, implementing agencies and NGOs to enhance existing efforts to carry out the Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) guidelines on preventing and responding to sexual violence for women refugees and internally displaced persons.
 - ii. Country B will commit to twinning with Country C in providing financial and technical support for a period of five years in developing and implementing a national action plan for implementing UNSCR 1325 in Country C. An important component of twinning is sharing experiences and lessons learned between women leaders and civil society organizations from both countries.
 - iii. Country D will commit to increasing by x percent the number of women it puts forward for senior UN posts at D1 levels and above and to proposing women candidates for every Special Representative and Special Envoy appointment. Such recommendations should draw from national-level civil society experts.
 - iv. Country E commits to partnering with national and regional civil society organizations to develop comprehensive early warning systems.
- Partnerships combining the efforts of several Member States will be encouraged, matching not only donors and conflict-affected countries, but also the contributions of charitable foundations, the business community, civil society, regional organizations, international financial institutions, and UN agencies.
- Commitments made at the event will be catalogued, and progress towards achievement will be monitored in a transparent manner under the UNSCR 1325 indicators framework. Member States will commit to reporting on progress on their commitments at the 11th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 in 2011 and at subsequent UNSCR 1325 anniversaries. These anniversaries will also serve as opportunities to evaluate and revise past commitments and/or to make new commitments.
- The UN will present new and concrete commitments on UNSCR 1325 and, ideally, will convert the High-Level Steering Committee created for the commemoration of the 10th anniversary of UNSCR 1325 into a permanent High-Level Standing Committee on Women, Peace and Security with institutionalized civil society participation.
- Commitments will be submitted to the Secretary-General before the event although new commitments will also be welcome at the event.

SUGGESTED AGENDA:

- Opening statement by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, including his commitment to results-based, time-bound, measurable actions on women, peace and security. This statement will ideally reflect the concrete actions the UN system, and each component entity, will take to meet its women, peace and security obligations. UN leadership should also report on the results of the recent Global Open Days, and plans to institutionalize regular consultations with women by all UN heads-of-mission.
- A number of Member States, including some who are members of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, have indicated a willingness to support the Secretariat in preparing for the meeting, for example, by encouraging Member States to develop commitments and structuring the program in a creative way. A working group of Member States, UN representatives and CSAG should plan the agenda for the event and recommend a process for securing and reporting on commitments.

2. An Arria-formula Meeting of Member States of the Security Council in October

RATIONALE:

- An Arria Formula Meeting, a traditional tool of the Security Council, provides an opportunity for Member States of the Security Council to hear directly from civil society actors working and living in conflict areas about urgent action needed on the women, peace and security agenda.

TIMING:

- The Arria Formula Meeting should be held approximately two weeks before the Security Council's Ministerial Level Open Debate in October. This will provide the Security Council members with vital information to take effective action on the 10th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325.

SUGGESTED AGENDA:

As with the traditional Arria Formula meeting format, the agenda will feature briefings by representatives of civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, from conflict-affected countries, on women, peace and security issues. Arria formula presentations could be coupled with a roundtable or panel event to explore several "case studies" of situations where UNSCR1325 has been used positively to deepen democracy and prevent conflict. CSAG can assist in identifying speakers.

- The focus of the meeting will be on specific actions that the Security Council and the UN more generally will take to empower and protect women in the context of conflict, including presentations on successful programs and remaining challenges.

3. A Security Council Ministerial Level Open Debate on Women Peace and Security in October

RATIONALE:

- On the 10th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325, the Security Council will have an opportunity to reaffirm and re-energize its commitment to the principles of the empowerment of women and protection of women's rights in the context of armed conflict embodied in that resolution.

- The Security Council will highlight the centrality of women's rights to its mission of promoting international peace and security.

TIMING:

- Under the Security Council Presidency of Uganda, a meeting near the end of October will allow for substantial consideration of the input from the various meetings above, and will mark the actual anniversary of UNSCR 1325 (31st October).

COMMITMENTS:

- The Security Council should mark the 10th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325 with a strong outcome document that details its commitments on how it will meet its women, peace and security obligations. Specifically, we look forward to the Security Council establishing comprehensive procedures to receive, analyze and take action on women, peace and security matters.

SUGGESTED AGENDA:

- Each Security Council member should make a public statement highlighting its new commitment to promote the agenda of women, peace and security. Member states will be encouraged to ensure the highest possible level of participation, including from national capitals.
- As has been the tradition in the October women, peace and security meetings, the Council will hear from the Secretary-General and other relevant UN actors, including SRSG Margot Wallstrom, OSAGI, DPKO, DPA and UNIFEM, and representatives from civil society.
- A strong outcome document prepared in advance and with concrete commitments will ideally be adopted by the Security Council at the conclusion of the meeting.

II. THE ROLE OF CSAG

In 2000, UNSCR 1325 called on all Member States and the United Nations system to protect the rights of women in the context of armed conflict and to ensure their full participation in all conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and post-conflict reconstruction processes. October 2010 marks the tenth anniversary of UNSCR 1325 and offers an opportunity for Member States, the United Nations and civil society to work together to take concrete, measurable, and positive action to empower and protect women's rights in conflict situations.

CSAG advises the High-Level Steering Committee of the heads of United Nations agencies and entities on ensuring a coherent and coordinated approach to implementing UNSCR 1325 within the UN system. In addition to recommending priorities for commemorating the 10th Anniversary of UNSCR 1325, CSAG advocates for the full participation of women's groups and civil society in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda. In consultation with civil society, CSAG is preparing the following working papers with concrete recommendations for action by the United Nations, Member States and civil society:

- Women's Participation and Leadership in the United Nations and Peace Processes
- Civil Society Involvement in Peacebuilding
- Preventing and Responding to Sexual Violence against Women Displaced by Conflict
- Advancing National Action Plans, Regional Action Plans, and Twinning on Women, Peace and Security
- Resourcing Women, Peace and Security.