



10 Years of UN Women, Peace and Security

**Keynote Statement
by
Purnima Mane
Deputy Executive Director (Programme)
United Nations Population Fund**

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Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Introduction

I am so pleased to join you today in The Hague as we reflect on the 10-year anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

I would like to thank the Leiden University College Research Centre, the Dutch chapter of the Society for International Development, and the World Population Foundation for jointly organizing this event and bringing all of us together.

I'd like to congratulate The Netherlands for being one of 19 nations that has developed a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325. It's time for more nations to do so.

We are here today because we all agree, and this is the core of Security Council resolution 1325, that stopping sexual violence in countries affected by conflict and engaging women in peace talks and reconstruction is essential to international peace and security.

And yet, while we all know that this is true, we have a long way to go to make this a reality.

Today I will talk about progress and challenges, and the work of my organization, UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, and our State of World Population report being launched today that deals with women, peace and security.

Security Council resolution 1325

When the Security Council adopted resolution 1325 on 31 October 2000, it marked the first time in the Council's history that all actors involved in conflict and peace issues – the United Nations, Governments and non-State entities – were obliged to provide women and girls with the necessary physical and legal protection in conflict and its aftermath, and to ensure women's effective participation in decision-making on conflict resolution and peace-building.

This landmark resolution not only raised awareness of the unique and grave issues faced by women and girls in situations of armed conflict, but also provided those women with a legitimate basis to demand action from their governments and the international community.

By adopting the resolution, the global community recognized women's capacities as well as vulnerabilities, and declared that sexual violence is no longer an acceptable and unpreventable consequence of conflict.

With this resolution the world said enough is enough! Women must play a central role in preventing and solving conflicts and sexual violence must be prevented, prosecuted and punished.

Women, peace and security: situation in 2010

When we look back, we do see that in some important ways, Security Council resolution 1325 has led to broad shifts in the approach to women, peace and security issues.

UN peacekeeping, for instance, has changed dramatically. Women peacekeepers are now an integral part of peacekeeping missions, and gender issues are given priority in peacekeeping, from negotiations and decision-making, to security sector reform, and the enforcement of the rule of law.

The decade since the adoption of the resolution has also generated a flood of activities on the issue of women, peace and security by the Security Council, UN Member States, civil society and the UN System.

To supplement resolution 1325, the Security Council has adopted three subsequent resolutions. In 2008, resolution 1820 identified sexual violence as a tactic of war requiring specialized military and police responses. In 2009, resolution 1888 called for high-level leadership, the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and UN coordination to respond to sexual violence. In response, earlier this year, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed Margot Wallstrom of Sweden as his special representative on sexual violence in conflict and she has been working to raise awareness and goad further action.

It is important to note that resolution 1888 also calls for rapid-response teams of judicial experts to help counter impunity, women protection officers to work with peacekeepers to develop guidance for ending sexual violence, monitoring tools and the production of an annual report that will provide information on perpetrators of sexual violence.

Last year, in 2009, the UN Security Council passed another resolution, 1889, on women's leadership in peacemaking and conflict prevention, and called for a set of indicators to monitor implementation of Security Council resolution 1325.

So these four resolutions, 1325, 1820, 1888 and 1889 together represent the UN Security Council platform for women, peace and security and this is further reinforced by international human rights treaties and bodies, including the International Criminal Court that is seated here in the Hague. The ICC came into being in July 2002 after its founding treaty, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, came into force.

The Rome Statute names a broad range of sexual and reproductive violence crimes—rape, sexual slavery including trafficking, forced pregnancy, enforced prostitution, enforced sterilization, and other serious sexual violence—as among the gravest crimes of war. These are

also defined as "crimes against humanity" when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack on a civilian population, in times of peace as well as war, and by nonstate actors as well as officials.

The Rome Statute builds on the foundations laid by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia, which was the first to prosecute individuals for rape as a crime against humanity in 2001, the year following the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325.

UNFPA reponse

During the past decade, UNFPA has been actively engaged in coordinating response efforts for women, peace and security. This includes support in developing Nations Action Plans for the implementation of resolution 1325 in countries as diverse as Sierra Leone, Uganda, Liberia and Nepal. Our staff members have been engaged in providing training on resolution 1325 to United Nations staff, security and peacekeeping personnel, as well as civil society.

UNFPA is raising awareness, preventing and responding to conflict related gender-based violence, and providing legal assistance, and reproductive health and psychosocial services to women and communities affected by conflict.

UNFPA has also been engaged with other UN system partners in drafting global indicators to ensure accountability for implementing Security Council resolution 1325.

Civil Society

Civil society organisations have also stepped up action over the last 10 years in countries around the world. One example is the Women in Peacebuilding Network, which supported the groundbreaking participation of women in the Liberian peace process in 2003, and has since supported women's active involvement in the political and disarmament processes. Women's organizations have also been active in the Balkans, in the former Yugoslavia, supporting women who have been raped and who continue to suffer, and in all regions of the globe demanding accountability, justice and stronger action.

Long way ahead

However, while these various activities have generated momentum, responses have lacked coherence and systematic implementation and monitoring. And overall, the conditions faced by women and girls in situations of armed conflict remain cause for alarm and require solidarity and urgent action.

We all agree that peace is not viable when half the population faces discrimination and violence. And we also know that 45 per cent more women die in childbirth in conflict countries compared to non-conflict countries. We know that gender-based violence and resulting sexual and reproductive health complications are a major obstacle to the realization of women's

economic, social and political rights. And we know, as UN envoy Margot Wallstrom said recently, that women who have been raped walk in shame, while the perpetrators often walk free.

Speaking at a ministerial-level event on women, peace and security last month, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said “we must lament our lack of progress,” adding that “the international community is still failing to protect the most vulnerable.”

Calling the anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 a somber occasion with achievements over the past decade not meeting expectations, he called for concrete commitments to end the brutal and blatant violations of the bodies of women and girls, to put women at the front and centre of peace processes, to bring perpetrators to justice, to develop national action plans to implement resolution 1325 – so far only 19 of 192 UN Member States have done this, and to review progress against reliable indicators.

He also called for increased resources to fund civil society groups so they can plan and carry on their programmes.

The UN Secretary-General has pledged to make sure that the United Nations system takes a more coherent, comprehensive and measurable approach to implementing Security Council resolution 1325.

Indeed the data show that women continue to be excluded or seriously under-represented in peace negotiations, peacebuilding and recovery. Since 1992, women have represented, on average, just 7 per cent of official delegations and only 2 percent of signatories to peace agreements.

While the number of women civilian staff in peacekeeping operations has reached about 30 percent, women make up less than 3 percent of uniformed peacekeepers and 8 percent of UN police.

And women and girls continue to endure discrimination and gender-based violence, including systematic sexual assault during and after armed conflict.

The most recent example of the severity of abuse is the rape of more than 300 women and girls in the Democratic Republic of the Congo this year at the end of July and beginning of August. While the Security Council has condemned acts of sexual violence, it has not applied firmer measures such as sanctions.

In response to the recent mass rapes in the Congo, and the inability of the United Nations peacekeeping mission to prevent the brutal attacks, the Secretary-General’s special representative on sexual violence, Margot Wallstrom, traveled to the country to interview survivors, to ensure that they get the help they need, and to find ways to prevent future violence and break the cycle of impunity in the country.

Other missions were conducted by the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and the International Criminal Court. Between 30 September and 10 October, members of a panel for human rights met with dozens of victims, ranging in age from three to 61 years, in three provinces.

In every place the three-member body visited, it also held talks with Government officials, as well as civil society and UN representatives.

The members of the panel said there is a deep and clear call from victims for much more assistance and reparation.

According to the chair of the panel, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights Kyung-wha Kang: “Their husbands desert them, they are socially ostracized, and often this rejection is compounded for victims who suffer from fistula, victims who become pregnant and bear children as a result of rape, or victims who contract sexually-transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS.”

Health care and education for themselves and for their children were among the highest priorities for victims, while peace and security was the first and foremost concern for survivors in the war-ravaged Kivu provinces of eastern DRC.

“The women made it clear to us that the destruction must stop before any rebuilding can begin, and the panel is adding its own voice to this desperate plea for peace and security,” Ms. Kang noted.

With most victims not able to seek justice through the legal system since they could not identify or locate their perpetrators, the fight against impunity and access to justice are also vital elements, the body said.

Meanwhile one suspected perpetrator has been arrested in Paris and more warrants for arrest are expected from the International Criminal Court.

As part of this effort, UNFPA is working with partners in the UN system and civil society to coordinate sexual and reproductive health services in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and to collect data on the incidence of sexual violence to ensure a more effective response.

So this is a brief outline of progress and challenges. I am confident that with your insights and expertise here in The Netherlands and The Hague, we can increase the understanding of resolution 1325 and its applications into national policies and plans in the area of women, peace and security.

From conflict and crisis to renewal: generations of change

Today I am pleased to share with you the 2010 State of World Population report today, entitled, From Conflict and Crisis to Renewal: Generations of Change.

The report tells the story of women, men and young people who have lived through crisis and how they have begun rebuilding their lives and societies. It highlights how women in conflict and post-conflict situations are faring a decade after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325.

The report draws on the experience of women and girls, men and boys in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Haiti, Jordan, Liberia, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Timor-Leste, and Uganda, who speak for themselves about the challenges they face, the ways their communities are coping and about how many of them have become involved in reconstruction and renewal.

One of the heroes is Fiza Shraim, a Palestinian nurse, midwife and mother of 13 children, who during the Israeli attack on Gaza in 2008-2009, reopened an emergency delivery room and offered health and counseling services. Fifty-two women delivered babies safely during the 21-day crisis, as Fiza worked around the clock.

Another hero is Liberian Judge Evelina Quaqua, who presides over a unique court handling crimes of sexual violence. Since the return of a democratic government in Liberia with the election of Africa's first woman Head of State, Evelina says she has noticed a marked increase in the number of people willing to report rape because they now know their rights.

In all regions of the world, there are women standing up for peace and justice in very dangerous and difficult circumstances. Our State of World Population report is a call to action to support women and young people who suffer the worst consequences of conflict and disaster and to reinforce their extraordinary resilience and commitment in sustaining peace and recovery.

It is a call to action to not only build back, but to build back better to tackle entrenched inequalities.

It is time to end brutal attacks against women and girls during and after conflict, to put the right laws in place to bring offenders to justice, and to engage more women in peace processes.

The compelling stories in this year's report tell what it means to finish what the Security Council started 10 years ago, to work towards a world where peace is secured, human rights are protected and conflicts prevented.

Thank you and I look forward to our discussions.