

Brussels, 17 September 2008

## **Women, peace and security –it's time to boost awareness and action on full implementation of UN Security Council resolution 1325**

*At the initiative of Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy, over forty women leaders from politics, business, civil society have asked UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon to convene a ministerial level meeting in 2010 to review implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This initiative is a follow-up to the conference "Women: Stabilising an Insecure World" which united an outstanding group of over 40 leading women from all four corners of the globe at the invitation of Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner in Brussels in March 2008.*

Commissioner Ferrero-Waldner said: *"During our conference in March we committed ourselves to address the particular vulnerability of women to security threats, to press for a greater role for women in conflict resolution, and to strengthen our dialogue with those governments and leaders sceptical of the need to enhance women's empowerment. Today we are acting together to press for full implementation of UN resolution 1325, a crucial instrument to address these goals"*

She added:

*"The aims of UNSCR 1325: to increase women's involvement in peacekeeping and conflict resolution at all levels, to incorporate gender perspectives in peace agreements, to address the impact of conflict on women, protect against and prosecute sexual exploitation – are as pressing today as when they were first agreed in 2000. But despite some progress, much more remains to be done. That is why we believe we need to give new momentum to implementation by bringing together leaders from across the world to recommit themselves to these aims"*

The letter, handed over to UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon this week, was signed by such high ranking politicians as President of Finland Tarja Halonen, Prime minister of Ukraine, Yulia Tymoshenko, Deputy Prime Minister of Moldova Zinaida Grecianii, as well as former Presidents Vaira Vike-Freiberga of Latvia and Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka. They are joined by a host of women ministers and leading women from international organisations and civil society from around the world.

The letter to Ban Ki Moon argues:

*"Despite all that has been achieved already under UNSCR 1325, challenges remain. More effective monitoring of implementation of UNSCR 1325 is needed in order to alert member states and the Security Council to gaps in implementation. A stronger accountability system is required in order to drive more determined action in response to abuses of women's rights in and after conflict.*

*There is much that we can do. Where lessons are being learned, we should ensure that these are translated into standard practice. Where there are gaps in implementation, we should identify specific actions that can be taken to address them. In a world where other priorities are always crowding in, we should offer this chance for male and female leaders alike to make concrete commitments to realize the goals we all set ourselves in UNSCR 1325, and ensure that women play their part in shaping a more secure future for themselves, their communities, their countries and our world".*

## **Background**

Text of the letter sent to UNSG Ban Ki Moon:

### **"UNSCR 1325: Time to boost awareness and action**

On the eve of International Women's Day over 40 international women leaders gathered in Brussels at the invitation of European Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner for a conference "Women: Stabilising an Insecure World". The clear will of this group, which brought together heads of state, foreign ministers and leading figures from the international institutions, was that we should pursue with renewed vigour the implementation of all human rights standards, but in particular UN Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

**We are therefore writing to you to voice our wish that you should convene a ministerial level meeting in 2010 to review implementation of UNSCR 1325 and reinvigorate commitment to tackling outstanding issues.**

The objectives of 1325 – to increase women's involvement in peacekeeping and conflict resolution at all levels, to incorporate gender perspectives in peace agreements, to address the impact of conflict on women, protect against and prosecute sexual exploitation – are as pressing today as when they were first agreed in 2000. Despite progress, we believe much more remains to be done.

At our conference we saluted the countless women who rebuild societies and families shattered by conflict, and who have the courage to re-establish the foundations of local stability, without which there can be no global security. We committed ourselves to ensuring that women are actively engaged in local, national and international decision-making and called upon leaders everywhere to do the same. The participation of women is a pre-requisite for sustainable peace.

In particular we noted that women are increasingly the victims of armed conflict. It is unacceptable that in the 21<sup>st</sup> century we are seeing increasing levels of rape and other forms of sexual violence, used to humiliate, dominate, intimidate, or disperse members of a community or ethnic group. We therefore welcome the adoption of the new UNSCR 1820 condemning sexual violence on 19 June 2008.

Despite all that has been achieved already under UNSCR 1325, challenges remain. More effective monitoring of implementation of UNSCR 1325 is needed in order to alert member states and the Security Council to gaps in implementation. A stronger accountability system is required in order to drive more determined action in response to abuses of women's rights in and after conflict.

There is much that we can do. Where lessons are being learned, we should ensure that these are translated into standard practice. Where there are gaps in implementation, we should identify specific actions that can be taken to address them. In a world where other priorities are always crowding in, we should offer this chance for male and female leaders alike to make concrete commitments to realize the goals we all set ourselves in UNSCR 1325, and ensure that women play their part in shaping a more secure future for themselves, their communities, their countries and our world.

By convening such a ministerial meeting you would send an unambiguous message that UNSCR 1325 continues to require high level attention and political will. We stand ready to assist you, and look forward to your response."

List of signatories:

<b>First name</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Title</b>
Aichatou	Mindaoudou	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Amira	Dotan	
Ana	Palacio	Senior Vice President and General Counsel
Antoinette	Batumubwira	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Aurora	Mejía	Gender Ambassador
Chandrika	Bandaranaike Kumaratunga	Former President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
Edit	Schlaffer	Founder and Chair
Elisabeth	Guertler-Mauthner	
Emma	Bonino	Vice President of the Italian Senate
Fayza	Abounaga	Minister of International Cooperation
Hanan	Ashrawi	Member of the Palestinian Legislative Council
Ingibjörg	Sólrun Gísladóttir	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Josette	Sheeran	Executive Director a.i. of the United Nations World Food Programme
Joyce	Banda	Minister for Foreign Affairs
Karen	Koning AbuZayd	Commissioner-General of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency
Kinga	Göncz	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Lama	Hourani	
Latifa	Akharbach	Vice-Minister
Lianne	Dalziel	Minister of Commerce
Luisa	Morgantini	Vice-President
Margot	Wallström	Vice-President
Maria	Mutagamba	Minister of Environment
Maria Teresa	Fernandez De la Vega	Vice-President
Meritxell	Mateu Pi	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Micheline	Calmy-Rey	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Naomi	Chazan	former Deputy Speaker of the Knesset
Nayla	Ayesh	
Neelie	Kroes	Commissioner
Nino	Burjanadze	Kalbaton/ President of the Foundation of Democracy and Development
Olubanke	King-Akerele	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Rama	Yade	Minister of State
Rita	Kieber-Beck	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Sahana	Pradhan	Former Minister of Foreign Affairs
Sandra	Finley	President/Chief Executive Officer
Suhair	Al-Ali	Minister of Planning and International Cooperation
Suzanne	Mubarak	First Lady of the Arab Republic of Egypt
Tarja	Halonon	President
Ursula	Plassnik	Bundesministerin für europäische und internationale Angelegenheiten
Vaira	Vīke-Freiberga	Former President of the Republic of Latvia

Yulia	Tymoshenko	Prime Minister of Ukraine
Zinaida	Grecianii	First Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova