

Dutch National Action Plan on Resolution 1325

Taking a stand for women,
peace and security



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Foreword

"If non-violence is the law of our being, the future is with women."

- Mohandas Gandhi¹

On 31 October 2000, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The resolution recognises the disproportionate effects of war and armed conflict on women. It stresses the importance of women's role in preventing conflicts and of their full involvement in peace talks and political and socioeconomic reconstruction.

As the coalition agreement of the Fourth Balkenende government clearly indicates, Dutch development policy includes working actively through Project 2015 to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.² Women's political and socioeconomic development plays a central role in achieving these MDGs. The Minister for Development Cooperation has also said explicitly that the position of women will be one of his priorities. In the next four years, the Dutch government will pay more attention to implementing resolution 1325. It cannot do so on its own, however, and Dutch civil society – NGOs, women's organisations, universities and think-tanks – is glad to join in the effort to ensure more opportunities and rights for women. This was reflected in June 2007 when these social partners and the government drew up a Schokland agreement³ on women, peace and security, expressing their desire to work together on a National Action Plan on resolution 1325. This action plan aims at

1 Cited in Shelley Anderson ed., *Just words: quotations on gender, non-violence and peace* (Alkmaar: IFOR, 2005), p. 33.

2 In the year 2000 the UN General Assembly adopted the Millennium Declaration, including eight goals to help reduce the number of people suffering from extreme hunger or extreme poverty to a minimum by 2015. The eight goals are: (1) eradicate extreme poverty and hunger; (2) achieve universal primary education for boys and girls; (3) promote gender equality and empower women; (4) reduce child mortality by two thirds; (5) reduce maternal mortality by three quarters; (6) halt the spread of AIDS, malaria and other major diseases; (7) achieve significant improvement in environmental sustainability; and (8) develop an open trading system, enhance debt relief and increase development assistance.

3 The Pact of Schokland, signed on 30 June 2007 at an event in Schokland in the Netherlands' Northeast Polder, comprised a series of agreements between government and the public on efforts to reach the MDGs.

gaining systematic attention for, recognition of and support for women's role in conflict and post-conflict situations, and at identifying different organisations' responsibility for this process.

The Dutch National Action Plan for resolution 1325, drafted in consultation with the partners listed below, unites people and organisations active in the fields of development (including humanitarian aid), diplomacy and social action in a joint effort for conflict prevention and resolution, peace negotiations and reconstruction. It formulates action points in five categories: (1) the international legal framework; (2) prevention, mediation and reconstruction; (3) international cooperation; (4) peace missions; and (5) harmonisation and coordination.

The Dutch partners listed below (in alphabetical order) declare their intention, respecting each partner's role, mandate and expertise, to support the implementation of the Dutch National Action Plan on resolution 1325.

Amnesty International Netherlands

Centre for Conflict Studies, University of Utrecht

Platform for Women and Sustainable Peace (member organisations)

Cordaid

Department of Social Sciences, Wageningen University

Gender Concerns International

ICCO and Kerk in Actie (Church in Action)

Ministry of Defence

Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research

Oxfam Novib

People Building Peace Netherlands (steering committee)

SNV Netherlands Development Organisation

Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

Women Peacemakers Programme / International Fellowship of Reconciliation

WO=MEN / Dutch Gender Platform

Introduction:

UN Security Council resolution 1325

"Women, who know the price of conflict so well, are also often better equipped than men to prevent or resolve it."

- former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, statement on resolution 1325 (2000)

Wars and armed conflict are an everyday reality. Scenes of conflict in countries such as Sudan, Afghanistan, Iraq and the Democratic Republic of the Congo are fixtures in the daily news. Most are intra-state conflicts: they take place in a civilian setting and tend to involve non-state actors, whose aim is to influence the civilian population, mostly by violence and intimidation. The statistics are shocking: in 2001, roughly 90% of people killed in conflicts were civilians, of whom 70% were women and children.⁴

In recent years there has been growing interest in the different roles that women and men⁵ play in conflict prevention, emergence, management and resolution and in reconstruction, as witness the growing number of publications, instruments and policy documents on the subject. Traditional views of male and female roles are beginning to change. Women are no longer seen purely as victims of conflict and underdevelopment, but also as powerful agents of change and progress, and men are sometimes the victims of sexual abuse. Yet this deepening understanding of male-female relations is not yet adequately reflected in approaches to conflict and reconstruction. It is a commonplace that lasting peace and reconstruction will remain impossible if women – who, after all, make up half the population – are largely ignored. Women are still too often portrayed as nothing but victims of armed conflict. Their specific roles, needs and rights and their potential and capacity to contribute to peace processes and reconstruction are seldom taken into account.

4 Graça Machel, *The impact of war on children*, Save the Children report (New York: Palgrave, 2001), p. 1.

5 The words 'women' and 'men' in this plan should be read to include girls and boys, both victims and perpetrators: take child soldiers, for example.

The adoption in autumn 2000 by the UN Security Council of resolution 1325 on women, peace and security (mostly referred to simply as 1325) was meant to change this situation. It was of course no accident that this resolution was adopted. NGOs and the international women's movement had lobbied UN member states for decades to get the issue of women and security on the agenda. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted by the General Assembly in 1979, is usually seen as the first specific charter of women's rights. It gave a precise definition of discrimination against women⁶ and set out an agenda for member states to put an end to it. It also recognised for the first time women's sexual and reproductive rights and the role that culture plays in shaping gender relations. CEDAW was for years the most authoritative document underpinning efforts to carry out an agenda for women. However, implementation by the member states lagged behind, and calls for an international resolution grew louder. The 1995 Beijing Platform for Action once more affirmed the need for a resolution.

Adoption of 1325 on 31 October 2000 marked the first time in the UN's history that the Security Council explicitly described the effects of armed conflict on women and girls. Central to 1325 is the fact that women have an effect on conflicts and are affected by them. The resolution calls on everyone who is involved in peace, security and development to ensure that women participate actively in conflict prevention, peace negotiations and reconstruction and to take account of women's specific needs. It complements the work done by the UN's wide-ranging women's programmes. Implementation of 1325 is both an end in itself and a means of achieving the various security and development objectives.

Resolution 1325 calls on the UN and its member states to take a number of interrelated measures to strengthen women's position during and after armed conflicts. In this framework, then-UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan asked the member states to develop national action plans, so that it would be possible to call them individually to account for their implementation of 1325.

Unfortunately, only a handful of countries have developed such plans so far.⁷

6 The Convention defines discrimination against women as 'any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field'.

7 The countries that have adopted national action plans are Austria, Canada, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK; Finland is currently working on one. The plans differ substantially in form and length. They can be viewed through the web links towards the end of this action plan.

The Netherlands has taken a first step with a coordinated interministerial study of women's roles in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction.⁸

Partly as a follow-up to the report to the House of Representatives on this study, former Minister of Social Affairs and Employment Aart Jan de Geus, the minister responsible for coordinating policy on equal opportunities at the time, appointed an independent Women, Security and Conflict Task Force. This Task Force, made up of experts from the public sector, politics and civil society, was active from 2003 to 2006.⁹ It made a number of recommendations on gender in government policy, which are included at the end of this document. As these recommendations chiefly concern the Dutch government, they are largely procedural in nature. In 2006, the government then in office approved the Task Force's report. This action plan is a logical follow-up, since it fleshes out the recommendations contained in the report and anchors them in Dutch society.

The Netherlands is making a concerted effort to improve the position of women. In addition to the priority given to the issue in official development policy, Dutch NGOs and women's organisations have ongoing programmes around 1325 and Dutch institutes are doing research on women, conflict and development. Reduction of poverty – human, cultural and socioeconomic – has a central place in official Dutch development policy, which also focuses on supporting the people who suffer most. The majority of them – especially in conflict and post-conflict situations – are women and children. Getting results requires an integrated policy in the fullest sense of the word: working with NGOs, women's networks and their local partners, and Dutch knowledge institutions. Gender mainstreaming is used; that is, the implications of policy for men and women are considered separately.¹⁰

Improving the position of women is an absolute precondition for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and ensuring observance of the most

8 T. Bouta and G. Frerks, *Women's roles in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction: literature review and institutional analysis* (The Hague: Ministry of Social Affairs and Employment, 2002).

9 The Task Force had seven members, all of them experts on equal opportunities and gender: Annemarie Jorritsma (chair), Magda Berndsen-Johansen, Thea Hilhorst, Maja Danon, Immanuel Korthals Altes, Peter Scholten and Tilly Troosnijder.

10 Strictly speaking, gender mainstreaming means that whenever a measure is planned, its implications for women and men are analysed both separately and in relation to one another. In the course of policymaking and project implementation a systematic, analytical investigation needs to be conducted of where and why women are excluded. A policy is only formulated, or in some cases corrected, after all of men's and women's conflicting interests have been reviewed. The ultimate goal of this process is to achieve gender equality.



Photo: Joost van der Zwan, Oxfam Novib (DRC).

fundamental human rights. While this demands an activist approach, some degree of modesty about what the Netherlands can do is in order. Improvements to the position of women in conflict and post-conflict areas will ultimately have to be brought about by the women themselves and the men in their immediate environment. The Netherlands wants to support their efforts as much as possible, however. Our country's outspoken opposition to all forms of discrimination against women has won us international recognition and gives our integrated foreign policy substantial added value.¹¹ In intensifying its efforts over the next four years to carry out UN Security Council resolution 1325, the Netherlands is pushing onwards in this direction.

¹¹ The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science also deserves credit for this. See its recent policy document 'More opportunities for women: equal opportunities policy 2008-2011', which gives particular attention to international equal opportunities policy.

Towards a Dutch National Action Plan

"In the Netherlands, we are developing a National Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 in consultation with all relevant ministries and civil society. I will assure you that it will not remain another piece of paper."

– Minister for Development Cooperation Bert Koenders, addressing the UN Security Council on the implementation of 1325 (23 October 2007)

It is important to explain what the exact aims of this National Action Plan are, what phases of conflict it will focus on, and what we understand by peace and security. The plan's goal is to obtain systematic attention for, recognition of and support for women's role in conflict and post-conflict situations. It can perhaps be best characterised as both a joint approach to women, peace and security by the Dutch government, civil society and knowledge institutions, and a framework, as concrete as possible, within which these partners can coordinate their work better and more effectively. The Dutch National Action Plan on 1325 will inform the efforts of the parties that have signed it, stating explicitly what is expected from them. In this sense it is structured in a fundamentally different way from most other countries' action plans, which are chiefly government documents. So far it is unique: there has been no other plan of this magnitude produced jointly by a government and civil society organisations.

In line with resolution 1325, this action plan focuses on the periods *during* and *after* armed conflict; that is, periods after armed conflicts have already begun. Nevertheless, conflict prevention – identifying and defusing societal tensions *before* they escalate into violence – remains a major objective of Dutch foreign policy and the core business of many NGOs. The difficulty, however, is in defining what activities fall under this heading. In principle, *all* activities in the field of development cooperation have prevention of future conflict as an underlying aim. To link this plan effectively and directly to 1325, therefore, rather than making it all-embracing and diffuse, we have opted for a more

targeted approach, without losing sight of important aspects of prevention. We should like to point out here that in conflict situations it is rarely possible to clearly distinguish separate phases of prevention, mediation and reconstruction. Reconstruction is itself an effort to avoid future conflict and thus a process of conflict prevention.

Since concepts like peace and security are very broad, this action plan does not address every aspect of them. For example, it does not examine the socioeconomic components. This calls for some explanation. Security is not only a question of physical safety, of safeguards against every form of violence. It is also a socioeconomic concept. For example, government should protect its citizens from famine and ensure that they are able to earn sustainable livelihoods. What is more, the best way to stop future conflicts from breaking out is to help improve people's socioeconomic circumstances. Creating more jobs can for instance stop people from taking up arms to secure their livelihoods. In this sense, security and development influence each other so directly that one may well ask where one stops and the other begins. Because this action plan focuses on the implementation of resolution 1325, however, it cannot include all the socioeconomic aspects of security. This plan thus deals chiefly with the physical safety and legal security of men and women. This is a very broad concept in itself, which requires cooperation with a broad range of actors and sweeping reforms in various sectors.

Our goal is to carry out the priorities for action set out in this plan in the next four years, i.e. by 2011. The plan does not stop there, however. Improving the position of women on a world scale is a long-term process. This action plan should be a launchpad for renewed cooperation among the different agencies and organisations that address women's position during and after conflicts.

Women before, during and after wars: victims, combatants and pillars of development

"Women's peacefulness is at least as mythical as men's violence."

– Sara Ruddick¹²

While war is a frightful experience for everyone, it always involves additional risks for women. Especially where the state has lost its monopoly on the use of force, kidnapping, rape and sexual abuse by members of militant movements are a constant threat. Women are also in danger where the state security services are in charge. Soldiers and members of the police force in conflict and post-conflict countries often commit sexual abuse.

Armed conflict is often responsible for drastic changes in relations between men and women. It often changes men's views about what qualifies as masculine behaviour: group pressure increases men's aggressiveness, dominant behaviour and inclination to treat women as inferior.¹³ Rape is used as a weapon of war to undermine women's self-worth and their husbands', family members' and communities' sense of honour. Women's bodies are thus ideologically transformed into battlefields: systematic sexual abuse serves to strike the enemy in their immediate home environment. Stigmatisation, trauma, depression and hatred are the result for abused women. Men too are affected by abuse: not only are they themselves abused more often than people realise, but the constant threat of violence and the fact that they have committed rape can lead to mental numbness and psychological damage.

¹² Sara Ruddick, *Maternal thinking: towards a politics of peace* (New York: Beacon Press, 1989).

¹³ It is a common misunderstanding that 'gender' is only about women; in fact it is about women, men and the entire range of social relations between them. Gender is an expression of the socially constructed roles assigned to men and women, as distinguished from their biological or physical characteristics. Since gender roles are learned and can vary, they can also change.



Too many women die in childbirth in Darfur, Sudan.

Photo: Margret Verwijk.

All this disrupts the social cohesion of communities and creates a breeding ground for future conflict. Prolonged exposure to violence tends to normalise it. In some conflict and post-conflict situations, soldiers and militia members view sexual violence as a legitimate way to discharge the tensions that a war entails, often under the influence of alcohol and drugs. Women are simply treated as possessions or transferable booty. The prostitution industry, founded largely on people smuggling, grows around military bases and refugee camps; the chance of contracting HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases increases. The absence of men (who have left for the front, been killed or fled) and a lack of the necessities of everyday life also mean that women have to go outside their villages or refugee camps on their own in search of food, water or wood, thus risking abduction and abuse. The camps themselves are not much safer for women: the widespread corruption and lack of supervision and safety lead to demands for sexual services in exchange for relief supplies. Women of childbearing age run additional risks: lack of contraceptives and the widespread presence of diseases, including sexually transmitted diseases, can lead to unwanted pregnancies and infection of mothers and unborn children with HIV/AIDS. Lack of health care also makes childbirth dangerous: maternal and infant mortality is alarmingly high in most conflict areas.

In many post-conflict countries, even when the rule of law has been restored to some extent, impunity tends to be the watchword when it comes to rape and

sexual abuse. Deeply rooted ideas about masculinity and widespread corruption in the – largely male – criminal justice system are often among the causes. Many women are afraid to speak openly about their experiences for fear of stigmatisation, loss of honour and retaliation. Men do not bear sole responsibility for maintaining inequality; women themselves share it. Ideas about power relations are so deeply rooted among many women – this is often called ‘the invisible power’ – that they keep one another in line in their communities and households.

‘My female neighbours’ looks are full of contempt. They sneer. I can feel it whenever I go out.... As if I did everything on purpose.... I can’t understand how the President dared to forgive on our behalf. How could he possibly do that to us? We, the victims, have the right to forgive, but not him. We should have a say. The terrorists must be ashamed of what they did.’ – Testimony by an Algerian woman who was abducted and raped¹⁴

As a result, there is a strong tendency in periods of conflict for existing inequality between men and women to intensify and for discrimination against women to increase. Men generally play the most prominent roles in armed struggle and in decisions about beginning, waging or ending it. This does not mean that women are reduced in these situations to mere victims, however. Women play a great variety of roles in all the conflicts in the world, even if their numbers and roles differ from men’s. For example, whether out of conviction or under compulsion, women have joined guerrilla forces or terrorist movements, as combatants or in support functions, in countries including Sri Lanka,¹⁵ Colombia, Uganda and Sudan. Like men, women are complicit in inciting ethnic hatred and carrying out genocide, as in Rwanda.

By contrast, there are other women who, despite the dangers involved, engage in non-violent resistance, as in the Somali Sixth Clan Initiative (see box 1). These women develop initiatives of their own to bring about peace and reconstruction. The proportion of female soldiers and police officers in peace missions is increasing, with good reason: they are in a unique position to develop solid contacts with

14 Testimony by an Algerian woman in Women’s Caucus for Gender Justice, *Public hearing on crimes against women in recent wars and conflicts: a compilation of testimonies* (New York: Women’s Caucus for Gender Justice, 2000), p. 9.

15 Approximately one third of the Sri Lankan militant organisation Tamil Tigers, for example, consists of women in various roles. They are given the same training as men and carry out suicide attacks. There are even a number of Tamil Tiger women pilots.

women in conflict areas and to help them raise the issue of crimes that stigmatise their female victims. Female soldiers and police officers are also visible role models. In short, women play as wide a range of roles in conflict and reconstruction as men do, and bring a different perspective to peacebuilding and development. They have an unrivalled familiarity with the problems that affect communities, and have often demonstrated their ability to set up networks with other women that transcend the dividing lines of conflicts.

Box 1. Somalia: the Sixth Clan Initiative

The organisation Save Somali Women and Children (SSWC) was founded in 1992 in Somalia, a very traditional country whose society is structured by clans. The organisation consists of women who saw that they were being treated as second-class citizens, often because they were married to men from different clans. SSWC united women from different clans into the ‘clan of womanhood’ – the only fixed identity that they had in common – and in 2002 demanded a place at the negotiating table for the peace talks. The ‘sixth clan’ of women received official recognition and a fixed number of seats was allotted to women in the Somali Parliament. Today SSWC is a development partner of the international peace organisation IFOR’s Women Peacemakers Programme (WPP).

When large numbers of men are active in an armed conflict – or cannot leave the house because they would be seen as potential combatants and thus risk being targets of violence – the traditional division of labour between men and women usually changes. Conflicts can have unintended liberating effects: when the men leave home to fight, women play greater social, economic and sometimes political roles in their communities. Their access to natural resources sometimes increases, and they acquire skills previously regarded as exclusively male. In Darfur, for example, women gather and process wood and sell it in the market. If the men can’t leave home, women sometimes learn from development organisations how to maintain water pumps. This becomes a question of necessity and a survival strategy.

When the men come back home and want to restore the old social relations, they can encounter resistance from the local community. Women often want to hold onto the gains they have made. The turbulent transitional period between war and reconstruction can thus be a unique opportunity to address the socioeconomic relations between the sexes and improve the position of women.

This is also a time to challenge the role of men in a society. Launching information campaigns, retraining both sexes and enshrining women's land and property rights in law can make it possible to build on the progress that women made in wartime. Eventually the state will have to claim ownership of this process and take its own measures to secure equal opportunities and rights for women.

Clearly, women are still too easily consigned in conflict and reconstruction to the role of victims. Despite the additional risks that they run, they cannot simply be portrayed as weak-willed and defenceless. The fact that they are still largely seen in this way is partly the fault of the international community. Cultural arguments for the exclusion of women are still too often accepted on the grounds that other cultures have different customs. This kind of cultural relativist reasoning¹⁶ cannot be used as our guiding principle. Resolution 1325 was adopted unanimously precisely because all states agree that there are minimum standards for the treatment of women that may never be infringed in any circumstances. It is also no accident that both the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda have recognised systematic rape as a war crime.



Photo: Hans Stakelbeek (Afghanistan).

¹⁶ Cultural relativism interprets people's beliefs and activities as a function of their cultural backgrounds. It is used to put the universality of human rights in question, with the argument that human rights are a Western concept that have no place in other cultures' ways of thinking.

However, the goal is not a kind of ‘one size fits all’ model for gender equality.¹⁷ Measures must be tailored to each specific context. It can even be counterproductive for outsiders to challenge deeply rooted gender relations. For this reason it is essential for women to play the leading role in emancipation processes and development aid in their own communities. They know best which channels to use to bring about change and at what pace change can take place. This process must begin with emergency aid activities. There are good reasons why 1325 devotes so much attention to increasing women’s share in decision-making. In the end, the most far-reaching, lasting changes in a society’s gender relations can only be achieved by the people themselves.

¹⁷ The fight for equal rights, independence and more equitable relations within society. The original goals were equal pay for equal work, the right to vote, equal treatment in the family, equality before the law and the right to sexual freedom.

The Netherlands: the story so far

"[...] if we want to work together in a more systematic way, we'll have to make more detailed agreements about the division of tasks.... Dutch efforts in fragile states make use of all the qualities that diplomacy, the defence forces and the development agencies have to offer."

– Minister for Development Cooperation Bert Koenders¹⁸

The preceding sections outlined the problems faced by women worldwide in conflict and post-conflict situations. Before we proceed to the action points that we have identified to improve women's position in the coming years, it is expedient to pause and examine what efforts Dutch government and non-governmental organisations are making at present to implement 1325.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (BZ)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has for years championed the cause of gender equality, as one of its areas of special expertise. It has found, however, that it is easier to talk about the subject than to take action. The position of women has not always featured consistently in Dutch foreign policy. In recent years, however, there has clearly been an effort to make up for lost time. Gender experts are now included in short-term missions, the position of women receives more attention in partner countries, the international humanitarian sector focuses more closely on their needs when providing emergency aid, and of course this National Action Plan on 1325 has now been published. The Minister for Development Cooperation has also identified equal opportunities for women as one of his four top priorities for the coming years.¹⁹ BZ is the coordinating ministry for the issue of women in conflict situations (including humanitarian

¹⁸ 'Engagement in fragile states: a balancing act', Society for International Affairs Lecture, Institute of Social Studies, The Hague, 4 October 2007.

¹⁹ The other three priorities are fragile states, growth and distribution, and the environment. For an exposition of Dutch development policy for 2008-2010, see the policy letter to the House of Representatives, 'Our common concern: investing in development in a changing world', 16 October 2007.

aid) and in reconstruction. It works with research institutions in this field, ensures gender issues are included in policy frameworks and policy documents, and carries out bilateral and multilateral programmes to improve the position of women. Cooperation with NGOs is essential to these efforts, as it is the NGOs that have the contacts on the ground and the expertise to make the programmes successful.

How does BZ operate abroad in the interests of women, peace and security? The governments of the Netherlands' partner countries still too often lack the will to effectively strengthen women's position and apply gender mainstreaming. There can be many reasons for this: politicians with past ties to militias suspected of violating women's rights; the desire not to dwell on a war that is now over, etc. Cultural patterns can also be at the bottom of it: an increase in women's participation in social processes could drastically change the existing balance of power. In addition to lack of political will, capacity tends also to be a problem: conflict and post-conflict countries often do not have the technical expertise needed to get effective measures off the ground to improve women's position. For all these reasons, BZ needs to tailor its interventions to the specific context. The international community must regularly exert political pressure to keep the issue on the agenda. To this end, the embassies are asked to engage in active gender diplomacy to keep the dialogue going at national level, and where possible to supply technical expertise. The Netherlands plays a pioneering role in this field, often in alliance with the Scandinavian countries.

Unfortunately, however, international attention and funding for women's issues have decreased in recent years. This makes it crucial to invest in empowering women and men in the communities in conflict areas to put this issue on the agenda themselves. BZ therefore supports many NGOs that make this a priority, thus endeavouring to combine political pressure from above with social pressure from below. Additional resources have accordingly been earmarked to improve the position of women, particularly through the MDG3 Fund.

Ministry of Defence

The role played by the Ministry of Defence within the Netherlands' integrated security and reconstruction policy is to ensure security, strengthen the security sector and supply specific military knowledge. While the Ministry aims to have over 12% women in the armed forces by 2012, at present they make up only 9%. Only 5% of female soldiers have the rank of major/naval lieutenant-commander

or higher and only 2% the rank of colonel or higher. In an era of peace missions, when the military is operating in a civilian environment, it is even more urgent to improve these ratios. In these circumstances, Defence faces a special challenge, particularly in more conservative societies where many women can only be approached by female soldiers. Keeping the peace between parties to a conflict or deploying troops against guerrillas means winning the support of the civilian population. The armed forces' goal is no longer a military victory alone, but the creation of suitable conditions for political and socioeconomic processes. Civilian-military cooperation (CIMIC) and a nuanced, diplomatic approach to local conflicts have become more essential than the large-scale use of force.

Female troops play a very important role in these altered circumstances. Not only are they better able to communicate with women in the operational area and to focus on women's problems, it has also been demonstrated that they have a calming effect on the tensions that can arise in a conflict area (see box 6). Male troops behave differently when women are present, and women often prove well equipped to find compromises between parties. The Ministry of Defence recognises women's critical role in armed conflicts and is very aware of the fact that deploying female troops increases a mission's effectiveness. To deploy more female troops, however, the Ministry of Defence needs to *have* them. Although considerable effort is being made to recruit women, increasing the percentage of women in the armed forces remains a difficult process. Nevertheless the Ministry has made considerable progress in mainstreaming gender in its operations. Women's roles and opportunities are now more frequently included in detailed checklists, operational plans and assessments. The topic of gender has also been incorporated into all initial and career training courses.

Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations (BZK)

The Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations strives to achieve equal representation of men and women (50%-50%) when deploying police officers overseas. In practice, since 2003, women have made up approximately 20% of police officers on peace missions. Gender aspects are systematically included in the training of police officers being posted abroad. BZK does not train special gender experts, however; the idea is for the police force in the Netherlands to benefit from the new experiences of police officers posted abroad. To avoid police officers' becoming estranged from their forces because of long postings abroad, the Ministry limits them in principle to a maximum of six months, though in some cases they can be extended to a year.

The summary above is clearly only a rough outline of current Dutch government efforts to implement 1325. It is hard to estimate exactly how much money and how many person-hours are being invested in the issue. We therefore first need to do a baseline measurement: this is the first action point of this action plan.

Dutch civil society: NGOs and women's and peace organisations

A society is a complex mixture of groupings, each playing a specific role in making and keeping it healthy, safe and liveable. The concept of civil society is particularly hard to define and can be interpreted in several very different ways. Although the concept is used frequently in the UN system, a clear definition is not available from that source either. In Agenda 21, adopted at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, the UN recognised nine major groups within civil society.²⁰ Women's organisations, through the 'major group' women, are seen as playing an important role in the process of sustainable development, including peace and security.

Within Dutch civil society, NGOs, development organisations, human rights organisations and women's organisations and networks play various central or auxiliary roles in implementing 1325. They focus primarily on supporting local women's organisations and groups that seek peaceful alternatives to violence and aim to safeguard women's rights in conflict and post-conflict situations. They also support groups which, in times of both conflict and peace, put in question the fundamental inequality between the sexes in their societies. Local women's and other organisations are often excluded from official consultative bodies, which are based on existing power relations. Organisations like the Women Peacemakers Programme, the Coalition on Women and Lasting Peace (VDV), Aim for Human Rights, Amnesty International, ICCO, Gender Concerns International, Cordaid and Oxfam Novib therefore strive to amplify these organisations' voices. Working with them provides Dutch NGOs with a broad network of partners on the ground with a clear perspective on women's rights in their societies. Through their work over the years, NGOs have also gained much practical knowledge of what is possible and what is not in conflict and post-conflict areas, which they incorporate into programmes, policies, guidelines and instruments.

²⁰ Agenda 21, UNCED 1992.

In addition, civil society makes a major contribution to the international discussion on gender equality and the implementation of resolution 1325. Women's organisations in the Netherlands have joined forces in the Coalition on Women and Lasting Peace. Several international NGOs, including Oxfam Novib and Amnesty International, operate on a world scale. Various Dutch NGOs like ICCO also work on 1325 through European and other international coalitions. Women's organisations have their own international networks, through which they lobby to influence governments' agendas. Women in Development Europe (WIDE) and the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) are respectively European and global networks working for gender equality. Gender Concerns International works with women's organisations in Brussels and members of the European Parliament on the issue of gender justice in conflict and peace. The People Building Peace coalition was established to implement the Global Action Agenda for the Prevention of Armed Conflict, and is in its turn affiliated with the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict. These international players, coalitions and networks can play a material role in setting the agendas of multilateral consultative bodies. Civil society organisations are also important as watchdogs, monitoring the implementation of policies once they have been adopted.

In October 2007 a Dutch NGO coalition issued an initial set of recommendations for a Dutch National Action Plan on 1325, the 'Pink Notes'. These collective recommendations, coordinated by the Dutch Gender Platform WO=MEN, can be seen as a first step towards a process of harmonising and monitoring the Dutch Action Plan within a broad social framework. They illustrate the growing importance of networks that pool the knowledge available in civil society and ensure its active exchange and coordination. This is part of a wider trend towards a network society,²¹ in which networks are increasingly central in publicising transnational social issues and consolidating change. There are already several social change networks working on gender and peace in the Netherlands, including WO=MEN, the VDV and People Building Peace. Such networks ensure active exchange of knowledge and analyses. The Dutch National Action Plan on 1325 can help broaden and intensify these exchanges so as to involve as many civil society players as possible.

21 Manuel Castells' publications on the network society include his book *The Rise of the Network Society* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), his edited volume *The Network Society: A Cross-Cultural Perspective* (London: Edward Elgar, 2004) and the volume *The Network Society: From Knowledge to Policy* (Washington: SAIS, 2006), which he co-edited with Gustavo Codas.

Dutch knowledge institutions

In the Netherlands expertise on gender and conflict is scattered over a great number of knowledge institutions, with individuals focusing on the subject in a wider academic field like gender studies, conflict studies or development studies. This has the advantage of mainstreaming gender work into the broader framework of the knowledge institutions. However, it can also lead to fragmentation and lack of coordinated research. Furthermore, funding for gender studies has declined in recent years, to the detriment of international research projects. As a result, partnerships with knowledge institutions in conflict areas are difficult to establish. Gender work at knowledge institutions generally concentrates on three dimensions: (1) carrying out scientific research programmes; (2) supplying knowledge-related products and services; and (3) organising training courses and facilitating learning processes. In practice, these three areas are interconnected: pure and applied research foster each other and new insights are reflected in both training courses and policy recommendations.

Encouraged by the Women, Security and Conflict Task Force (see Introduction), several representatives of knowledge institutions have drawn up a programme for scientific research on gender and conflict.²² In dialogue with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence, three themes were identified on which work is already being done and more intensive research is needed. The first theme is the impact of conflict on men's and women's lives and the relations between them, and the effect that formal and informal institutions and legislation have on them. The challenge is to learn lessons from the different realities experienced by men and women. The second theme concerns the use and effects of violence before, during and after conflicts, and the ways in which communities can break cycles of escalating violence. The final theme is gender and sexual violence in the context of conflict interventions, from peace missions to governmental and non-governmental peace initiatives.

Research on gender and conflict needs to take account of:

- intersections between gender and class and other social or ethnic differences;
- patterns of continuity in gender conflict and sexual violence between periods of peace, formal or real, and periods of open conflict;

²² Professor D.J.M. Hilhorst et al., 'Gender and violent conflict: proposal for an NWO research line', www.nwo.nl, 2007.

- the differential effects of the multiple dimensions of conflict, from the international level to the local;
- the linkage between different aspects of gender: men and women's social positions and roles, changes in normative gender expectations, and men's and women's self-perception.

This demands interdisciplinary research. Representatives of Amsterdam University, Maastricht University, Radboud University Nijmegen, Utrecht University, Wageningen University, the Institute of Social Studies, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), the Netherlands Defence Academy and the Netherlands Institute of International Relations at Clingendael joined in drawing up this programme. At the moment there are no funds to carry it out; finding research funding is a priority in this National Action Plan.

In addition to doing scientific research, knowledge institutions provide knowledge-related services to government bodies and civil society organisations active in the field of gender. Applied research – translating theoretical knowledge into practical knowledge for the use of actors working on issues of gender and conflict – includes a number of specific activities:

- developing gender-sensitive analytical tools, often in cooperation with NGOs and/or government bodies, that can be used to make policy and practical interventions in the field of gender more effective and less gender-blind;
- generating gender-sensitive indicators and measuring instruments to show the outcomes and effects of both gender-specific and more general interventions. Determining progress in reaching more intangible targets like increased gender awareness remains a particularly urgent challenge;
- monitoring and evaluating progress in increasing gender sensitivity and gender awareness in development programmes and peace missions. This includes evaluating government policy that has already been implemented and implementing national and international agreements, in some cases with the government and/or NGOs as client.

Finally, gender experts at knowledge institutions play a part in public information campaigns, education and training. Training courses provide a particularly good opportunity to ensure that actors in the fields of development cooperation and peace missions systematically incorporate gender into their work.

Specific steps, 2008-2011

"For it isn't enough to talk about peace. One must believe in it. And it isn't enough to believe in it. One must work at it."

– Eleanor Roosevelt, (1884-1962), peace activist and former First Lady²³

There are many different players at all sorts of levels whose task it is to implement 1325, from highly-placed figures in policy bodies like the UN and national ministries to grassroots activists in local NGOs and individual care providers. However, this is first and foremost a task for the women and men directly affected. Their conditions differ greatly and change rapidly, so it is crucial to get a clear picture of what is happening at the various levels. Difficulties in gaining access to some regions, for example, result in our having only a fragmentary understanding of the local situation. A wide range of people and organisations therefore need to be involved in order to ensure systematic attention for, recognition of and support for women's role in conflict and post-conflict situations. Bilateral and multilateral activities at different levels must reinforce one another and take place in tandem, with adequate coordination. The Dutch National Action Plan on 1325 focuses on women, peace and security in relation to:

- (1) the legal framework;
- (2) conflict prevention, mediation and reconstruction;
- (3) international cooperation;
- (4) peace missions; and
- (5) harmonisation and coordination.

The first four of these points indicate areas where the action plan's signatories are active; their joint plans in these areas for the coming years are set out below. The fifth heading relates to specific ways in which the partners can work more

²³ Cited in Shelley Anderson ed., *Just words: quotations on gender, non-violence and peace*, p. 40.

closely together. Despite their division into different themes, the action points listed below should ultimately be seen as a whole; the various themes are meant chiefly to identify which organisations are responsible for what. The activities listed below under the different headings are combined at the end of this action plan in an overall matrix.

1 Legal framework

“For reconciliation of a conflict, truth and responsibilities must be established, violations must be judged and sentenced.... Apart from the horrific re-traumatisation that victims have to suffer when they have to live with seeing their torturers at every corner of the street, amnesties that do not complete this process are bound only to cover up and veil the terrible wounds of victims and of perpetrators that will surge up again and again in subsequent conflicts, never healed.” – Marieme Helie Lucas, November 2000²⁴

In recent decades we have seen a major extension of the international human rights architecture. Resolutions have been adopted to guarantee the political, socioeconomic and cultural rights of all people, and regional tribunals have been established where human rights violations can be prosecuted. The signatories to this action plan attach the greatest importance to human rights. For example, the Dutch government endorses the concept of a ‘responsibility to protect’: that is, if countries are themselves incapable of safeguarding the rights of their citizens, they must be called to account and steps must be taken by the international community. Resolution 1325 calls upon “all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians”. It is clear by now, however, that this is still very far from the case in practice. There is a discrepancy between the international standards that have grown up over the years and reality. This problem must be tackled. To safeguard women’s position in conflict and post-conflict areas, a number of steps must be taken with regard to both the design of the legal system and law enforcement. What is more, people must become aware that violence against women is a harrowing problem in order to launch discussion in their own countries and so prevent escalation in the future.

24 Cited in Women’s Caucus for Gender Justice, *Public hearing on crimes against women in recent wars and conflicts*, p. 3.

The design of the legal system

Firstly, it is essential that the laws of the countries concerned protect women's rights and combat impunity, thus progressing towards an effective operation of the rule of law. This applies particularly to countries where the official legal system accommodates the unofficial system: village customary law, administration of justice by village elders, or religious and tribal courts. Ratification of CEDAW, which defines discrimination, and the Rome Statute, which enables international prosecution of human rights violations, is especially important.

- BZ will encourage fragile states to bring national legislation into line with the internationally applicable human rights agreements. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, CEDAW, resolution 1325 and the Rome Statute are the central documents in question. Where necessary, states will be called to account for their failure to observe international laws and conventions.
- Where unofficial legal systems prevail, the signatories to this action plan will work where necessary to ensure the protection of women's rights.

Law enforcement (training – prosecution – victim support)

In cases where internationally applicable human rights norms are not upheld, steps must be taken to protect women. People should be trained so that they can independently raise and tackle the issue of human rights violations, and have a good grounding in the fundamentals of the rule of law. This applies to officers of the national courts and to international staff posted to the national justice sector.

- BZ and civil society will encourage and monitor training in legal procedures for people working in the national justice sector – lawyers, judges, prosecutors, police officers, etc. – and for people working outside the official sector to promote observance of human rights.
- BZ will encourage the organisation of training courses on women's rights within the justice system for staff involved in multilateral UN operations. NGOs and knowledge institutions can be called in when necessary to organise the courses.

Box 2. The Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia

The Dutch development organisation ICCO finances AFELL, the Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia. Founded in 1990, AFELL focuses on the human rights of marginalised groups like women and children. The organisation provides legal aid, encourages women to report crimes, campaigns for a juvenile justice system and develops reconciliation and reconstruction initiatives. It has contributed to the adoption of strict legislation against rape, which entered into force in January 2006. It is currently conducting a campaign to publicise this legislation in rural areas in Liberia.

Those who violate human rights should be held accountable and where possible prosecuted. Resolution 1325 emphasises “the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for ... crimes ... relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls”.

- BZ, BZK, the Ministry of Defence and the NGOs will condemn generalised impunity and encourage the punishment of perpetrators of all forms of gender-related violence against women and girls as well as men.
- BZ and the NGOs will continue to engage in dialogue with local NGOs and women’s networks that are working to have human rights violations prosecuted. Where necessary, they will encourage instruction and training.

Special measures must also be taken to protect women and girls from violence. Psychosocial care provision is necessary to set reconciliation in motion.

- BZ, BZK, the Ministry of Defence and the NGOs will monitor the protection of women in the course of proceedings, whether as victims or as witnesses, and in prisons.
- BZ and the NGOs will support local organisations that provide psychosocial help to victims of human rights violations.
- Through their networks, women’s organisations will express solidarity and provide support to victims, encourage local women’s leadership and help create the conditions for the restoration of social cohesion on the basis of gender equality.

Raising awareness

The areas for special attention mentioned above are the first steps on the road to restoring a sense of justice. There can be no genuine, lasting peace without justice. Ensuring justice is part of the broader societal process of reconciliation, and has a strong preventive effect on any possible resurgence of conflict. Human rights violations must therefore be made public and not treated as taboos. This makes it important for women to get access to the media so they can tell their stories and contribute in this way to raising public awareness.

- The NGOs will work to facilitate women's media access so that they can publicise human rights violations and violence against women.
- Women's organisations will mobilise their international networks to give women themselves a voice so that they can raise the issue of the violation of their rights and articulate their specific desires and needs.

2 Conflict prevention, mediation and reconstruction

“Women have been both peace makers and peace preventers.... [T]hey have provided some of the vital tools which the whole society needs in order to build peace – it now remains to be seen how good women and men will be at using them.” – Valerie Morgan, Northern Ireland, 1995²⁵

Resolution 1325 reaffirms “the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and [stresses] the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution”. By taking part in mediation and reconstruction, women get more of a say in their countries' future – and thus in their own. Lasting change can only occur if women and men on the spot play the leading role in it; the key word here is empowerment. Women are often active at grassroots level in mediating in conflicts, setting up women's networks that help reintegrate former militia members, helping people deal with traumas resulting from wartime experiences, organising women's education and raising the issue of human rights violations with the government. They must receive the support they need to take the lead themselves in their own emancipation process.

25 Cited in Marie Vlachová and Lea BIASON, eds., *Women in an insecure world: violence against women – facts, figures and analysis* (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), 2005), p. 201.

Conflict prevention

As mentioned above, conflict prevention plays a relatively small part in this action plan. Nevertheless we can list a few major points of departure.

- The Dutch NGOs and women's and peace organisations and their partners abroad will keep BZ, BZK and the Ministry of Defence informed, through the embassies, the general policy dialogue and early warning indicators, of disquieting gender-related developments in various societies. Women's networks will be the main source of information. This dialogue on stability will take place at country level. The signatories affirm their intention to discuss relevant developments in a BZ working group at least once a year.
- BZ will foster the exchange of knowledge on prevention among the appropriate national and international partners and at knowledge institutions.

Mediation

Whenever attempts are made to resolve conflicts, at whatever level, it is important that women be involved in them. Because women are still invited too infrequently to the negotiating table, their role continues to be neglected when agreements are drawn up about peace and the reform of state institutions that usually ensues. Women often play a mediating role disconnected from the official parties, in national and international networks and at village level.

- When one or more of the signatories is involved in negotiations, either directly or as a facilitator, they will pay attention to a more equal representation of men and women in mediation and decision-making processes and advocate explicit affirmation of women's role in all aspects of reconstruction.
- BZ and the NGOs will consult each other on a case-by-case basis about women's potential role in specific attempts at mediation and in follow-up.
- Where possible women trained by NGOs in the affected countries will be involved in attempts at mediation facilitated by BZ.

Box 3. The Northern Ireland Women's Coalition

The Women Peacemakers' Programme (WPP) of the international peace organisation IFOR has worked with the women of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition (NIWC). These women, from Protestant and Catholic backgrounds, formed a political party in order to have input in the Good Friday Agreement and thus try to bridge the gap between Northern Ireland's communities. They aimed at involving previously marginalised groups – particularly women – in decision-making, and campaigned to add crucial elements of lasting peace to the agenda: health care, social security, a ministry for children and families, and recognition of the rights and needs of the victims of violence. The NIWC's contribution to the peace process, especially its 'development of a "politics of listening"', was praised on all sides.

Reconstruction

When, after mediation attempts at various levels, some degree of peace has been restored, women's interests must be promoted as part of the reconstruction of society. Reconstruction is a broad process, entailing a return not only of physical safety but also of every aspect of normality. By contrast with the NGOs, BZ works on reconstruction primarily through multilateral channels and coordinates its efforts as much as possible with other donors. Because this action plan concerns peace and security and cannot address every socioeconomic aspect of reconstruction, it focuses mainly on security sector reform and reconciliation. The restoration of some degree of peace puts efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals back on the agenda; for this reason, the plan also discusses some general issues relating to capacity building.

Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration

Within the field of security sector reform, the process of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) merits special attention. Women who were active in a militant movement as combatants or in a support role are still too often ignored in processes of disarmament and demobilisation, and too little attention is given to the difficulties they encounter in returning to society

(see box 4). The reasons are usually that women are not seen as a security risk and that the concept of ex-combatant is defined too narrowly. Some women see no other way to survive than to throw in their lot with a militia; when they return, they run a serious risk of being stigmatised or cast out. Many women accordingly withdraw from the official DDR process and ‘disappear’.

- BZ, BZK, the Ministry of Defence and the NGOs will take account in DDR programmes of the varying interests and needs of women and men – not as homogenous groups, but in all their diversity. The signatories will promote the separate registration of women, specific facilities, the destruction of weapons and the use of gender expertise.²⁶
- BZ and the NGOs will promote the establishment of non-military DDR programmes, with their main target group being women who have not taken an active part in armed conflict but have been involved in it in other ways.
- NGOs will develop programmes focusing specifically on the reintegration component of DDR. BZ will support UN organisations that do the same. The signatories will promote the production of labour market assessments, the identification of innovative forms of economic activity that go beyond traditional women’s occupations, and training and retraining courses for men and women. The prevailing views about reintegration in the societies concerned will be respected as long as they do not stigmatise women.²⁷

26 See Tsjeard Bouta, *Towards a Dutch policy on gender, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration* (The Hague: Clingendael, 2005). In addition to an extensive analysis of women’s role in DDR, this publication explains in more detail the measures listed here. It has been used explicitly as a policy document.

27 Idem.

Box 4. Case study: DDR in Liberia

Between 1998 and 2002, approximately 6900 child soldiers were demobilised in Sierra Leone. However, only 8% of them were girls, while research had shown that girls amounted to roughly 30% of the country's child soldiers. The UN agencies and others that guided DDR in Liberia learned from this tragic missed opportunity, and took specific measures:

- opening separate demobilisation camps or separate areas within camps for women;
- involving women's networks in caring for and supporting victims of sexual violence;
- giving female ex-combatants access to health care, basic education, skills training and personal development counselling.

From: The impact of guns on women's lives (London: Amnesty International/IANSA/Oxfam, 2005)

Security Sector Reform (SSR)

Improving security in a society requires dovetailing with the process of Security Sector Reform (SSR). This is a broad process to reform security institutions: the legal sector, armed forces, police, government oversight agencies, etc.²⁸ The legal sector is discussed in section 1 of this chapter. Many government agencies and representatives of civil society are involved in SSR and need to act in the most coordinated way possible. To perform well, a country's security sector needs to include women in all its institutions. The armed forces and police need special attention: for example, female police officers are indispensable in taking care of female victims of stigmatising crimes like rape and in helping them report them.

- BZ, BZK and the Ministry of Defence will work to include and train more women in all the security institutions of the states concerned.
- BZ will facilitate contacts in the SSR field among its own staff and with BZK, the Ministry of Defence and civil society so that women's voices are heard in all activities.

²⁸ BZ recently added a memorandum to its SSR policy framework: 'Developing the security sector: security for whom, by whom? Security sector reform and gender'. The memorandum explains women's role in SSR at length and gives specific tools for action. BZ and the Ministries of Economic Affairs and Defence adopted it in 2007 and will implement and apply it. Other organisations are of course welcome to use it.

- Women's organisations will make their experience, expertise and knowledge of sociocultural processes available to people who have to apply a gender perspective to SSR activities.

Reconciliation

To ensure truly lasting peace, the different parties to a conflict and the communities associated with them must reconcile with one another. Women often play an important role in this process.

- NGOs will develop projects and activities that, through training and funding, support women's efforts to play a greater role in reconciliation.
- Women's organisations will develop activities that enable women in the countries concerned to form women's groups to work for reconstruction.

General

The outbreak and aftermath of a conflict unavoidably bring a country's socioeconomic development, as defined by the Millennium Development Goals, to a standstill. MDGs 3 and 5 refer specifically to equal rights for women and their sexual and reproductive health. As society recovers from a conflict, these goals must be pursued by every possible means. In addition to the action points directly related to DDR and SSR, it is therefore essential to make a number of commitments about capacity building in general.

- In carrying out and financing their reconstruction programmes, BZ and the NGOs will see to it that research is done and action is taken on gender-specific needs and that women's access to these programmes is ensured.
- The Dutch embassies will actively seek out and support projects on women, peace and security, especially in Dutch priority regions such as the Western Balkans, Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa and the Great Lakes region.
- Where possible, the Dutch embassies will make room in their budgets to appoint gender experts to their staff. If it is difficult to attract such staff from the Netherlands, the possibility will be explored of recruiting locally.
- Where possible, the Dutch embassies will designate staff members as focal points for local NGOs that deal with violations of human rights in general and women's rights in particular.

- In allocating resources from the Stability Fund, BZ will give special attention to gender and the gender perspective in projects, especially in Dutch priority regions.
- BZ will support efforts to improve and enhance women's skills that are relevant to participation in political and administrative decision-making, reform of state institutions, peacekeeping and socioeconomic reconstruction.
- BZ, women's organisations and NGOs will endeavour to improve women's socioeconomic situation by advocating equal property rights, land rights and inheritance rights in the countries concerned.
- In providing humanitarian aid in crisis areas, BZ and the NGOs will give attention to education for girls and women and the protection of their sexual and reproductive rights and health, including their right to control their own bodies. The signatories will foster education on family planning and sexually transmitted diseases.

3 International cooperation

It is crucial that we view the issues surrounding women, peace and security from an international perspective. First, this is a practical necessity: the Dutch government is well aware that it is a relatively small global player, with limited resources. Ensuring the effectiveness of Dutch activities relating to women, peace and security in conflict or post-conflict countries will involve extensive multilateral and international cooperation. Second, NGOs can benefit greatly from making clear agreements and sharing responsibilities with their international partners. The signatories to this action plan wish to use their international and multilateral contacts to actively promote resolution 1325. International activities in this context should be harmonised as far as possible.

Promoting the implementation of 1325

It is important that resolution 1325 be recognised for what it is: a call to action and a core document for future activities involving peacebuilding and development in conflict or post-conflict areas. Dutch organisations plan to take a leading role in implementing resolution 1325 in all international forums. Their aim is to publicise the content of the document, as well as the role of women in conflict or post-conflict situations and to clearly express the Dutch position on women, peace and security within these forums.

- The signatories to this plan will, in cooperation with their partners and other countries, work actively towards the implementation of resolution 1325 in all relevant forums, including the United Nations (and its organisations), NATO (as part of its multilateral efforts for peace and security), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the European Union (EU), including the European Commission, the African Union (AU) and the Bretton Woods institutions (the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank).
- BZ, BZK and the Ministry of Defence, together with the NGOs, will urge their international and multilateral partners to ensure the active participation of women in humanitarian aid, conflict prevention, mediation, reconstruction and in DDR/SSR and reconciliation processes, and to put this into practice in their programmes.
- BZ will provide the permanent representatives of the Netherlands in these multilateral organisations with more information on Dutch progress on women, peace and security.

Harmonisation at European and international level

The implementation of Resolution 1325 should be harmonised as closely possible. The European Union, and other countries that have an action plan, will be the Netherlands' first points of contact. The Netherlands is a significant player within the EU and will use its position to keep 1325 on the agenda. Beyond the activities referred to above, the establishment of a European national action plan on 1325 is crucial. The Dutch government will also promote the development of action plans in its bilateral relations. Where necessary, the signatories to this action plan will offer international support for the integration of a gender perspective in the policies of international and multilateral institutions. Finally, we recognise that the UN has a key role to play in the implementation of 1325. The activities of various UN organisations could be less fragmented, however, if their numerous women's agencies were to be restructured. The Netherlands therefore supports the planned reform of the UN gender architecture.²⁹

²⁹ The Netherlands is in favour of streamlining the UN where development aid is concerned. In November 2006 the UN's High Level Panel on System-Wide Coherence published a report stating that the UN must strive to follow the 'delivering as one' principle: combining organisations per country, with a single leader and a single budget. In this context, it was suggested that UNIFEM, OSAGI and DAW be amalgamated into one body which would report to the Deputy Secretary-General.

- BZ will urge the European Commission to devote more attention to the issue of women and armed conflict, and will press for the formulation of a European Action Plan on 1325, including indicators related to this theme.
- Dutch NGOs and women's organisations will also work for the establishment of a European Action Plan on 1325. They will keep track of developments related to the recently founded 1325 EU partnership. If appropriate, the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office (EPLO) could play a facilitating role.
- At bilateral level, BZ will seek to stimulate cooperation with like-minded countries in promoting the development of national action plans in countries where they do not yet exist, especially countries within the EU.
- Where necessary, BZ, BZK and the Ministry of Defence will play a supporting role in introducing or emphasising the gender perspective in the policy of the international and multilateral organisations referred to above. This can be achieved with technical assistance in gender mainstreaming, resource packages and through policy support.
- Dutch knowledge institutions will stimulate international research and knowledge sharing in the field of women, peace and security.
- The Dutch government supports the reform of the UN gender architecture: the amalgamation of UNIFEM (UN Development Fund for Women), OSAGI (UN Office for the Special Advisor on Gender Issues) and DAW (UN Division for the Advancement of Women).

Box 5. Gender Resource Package (GRP)

The Netherlands, together with Germany, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the United Kingdom, supports the project 'Mainstreaming a gender perspective in multidimensional peacekeeping operations' run by the UN's Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO). With these countries' support, the DPKO has drawn up a Gender Resource Package (GRP), comprising an example of a mandate for gender mainstreaming in peace missions and a guide for incorporating a gender perspective in the various functional areas of peace missions, including evaluation and monitoring. Embedding gender into every aspect of peacekeeping will provide a solid foundation for further mainstreaming activities.

4 Peace missions

“Women’s presence (in peacekeeping) improves access and support for local women... it broadens the repertoire of skills and styles available within the mission, often with the effect of reducing conflict and confrontation. Gender mainstreaming is not just fair, it’s beneficial.” - UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations³⁰

Part of 1325 is concerned with increasing gender sensitivity in peace missions. The resolution “urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict”. In Dutch policy, too, we will strive to deploy more women in peace missions and to take account of the female population of the country in question. It is also important to provide sufficient gender training for those participating in peace missions. Resolution 1325 requests member states to “incorporate these elements (...) into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment and further requests (...) that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training”. The Netherlands will gladly act on this request.

Mandate

It is important that when the UN grants a mandate for a peace mission it makes explicit reference to the role of gender, as set down in 1325. This will encourage participating countries to make appropriate efforts regarding the position of women and legitimise international efforts in this area. Furthermore, 1325 should be embedded in the operational guidelines of multilateral organisations involved in peacekeeping and security.

- BZ will press for the incorporation of 1325 into all relevant Security Council resolutions and mandates (as well as terms of reference for missions) and tasks relating to peacekeeping or building.
- Government agencies will emphasise the role of women in the operational guidelines for UN, EU and NATO peace missions.

³⁰ Mainstreaming a gender perspective in multidimensional peacekeeping operations (New York: UN DPKO, 2001), p. 247.

- BZ and the Ministry of Defence will ensure that 1325 is incorporated into operations supported or conducted by the Netherlands, via operational instructions, master plans, reports and evaluations.

Codes of conduct

It is essential that peacekeepers operating abroad set the right example. Therefore, codes of conduct should be drawn up – where that has not been done already – and enforced internationally. This may meet resistance from troop-supplying countries, which in practice sometimes condone impunity or even promote it where their own personnel are concerned.

- Staff from BZ, BZK and the Ministry of Defence will strictly comply with codes of conduct that apply to any peace mission, including when they are operating under the flag of NATO or the UN.³¹
- BZ and the Ministry of Defence will call its UN and NATO partners to account on compliance with codes of conduct in peace missions (specifically where sexual violence and exploitation are concerned).
- The Ministry of Defence is promoting the creation of local focal points in international military and police missions, to which local civilians and peacekeepers can report in confidence incidences of sexual harassment or more serious misconduct.

Expertise

It is imperative that anyone posted to a conflict or post-conflict zone – whether soldiers, diplomats or development workers – receive training about specific gender roles in that area. Such training should be standardised. A gender perspective in conflict situations can give local men and woman the help they need to change their situation for the better. It is also important for such expertise to be available internationally during peace missions, not only in the Netherlands.

³¹ The Ministry of Defence has its own code of conduct, which applies equally to individual soldiers and to the participation of Dutch units in peace missions. The code of conduct, published in the form of routine orders from the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces sets out in five points the standards with which a soldier must comply: professionalism, teamwork, taking responsibility, integrity and creating a safe, secure working environment. The recommendations of the Staal Committee (established to research the prevalence of inappropriate conduct in the armed forces) call for the explicit formulation of standards of conduct, laying the responsibility for integrity primarily at the feet of commanding officers, tasking independent professionals with monitoring integrity issues, and adjusting management and organisation with a view to creating a safe working environment.

- The signatories to the action plan will provide civilian and military participants in peace missions with context-specific training on the roles and capabilities of women.
- BZ, BZK and the Ministry of Defence will support the position of functional gender specialists on Dutch bases.
- Where possible, BZ will, in consultation with the Ministry of Defence, send gender experts on short missions to conflict or post-conflict zones to provide technical support. NGOs, women's organisations and knowledge institutions can also provide expertise.
- When involved in peace missions, BZ, BZK and the Ministry of Defence will urge those international organisations responsible for assessment and training to increase their focus on the specific role of women in the peace and development process. Dutch NGOs will do the same among international NGOs which are involved in assessment and training.

Internal relations among peacekeeping forces

Women should be well represented not only in decision-making bodies responsible for peace missions, but also in the conflict areas themselves. It is often difficult to recruit sufficient qualified female military personnel, but this can be solved partly by adjusting the application procedures for peace missions. Female interpreters and mediators who can develop local contacts are also invaluable, but difficult to source. The signatories to this action plan wish to actively promote the deployment of women on international missions. This applies not only to multilateral or military peace missions: NGOs work to support civilian peace missions to conflict areas. Many women are already involved in such missions, but there is not yet any form of specific gender policy. This needs to change.

- BZ, BZK and the Ministry of Defence will press for a greater – and if possible, equal – proportion of women in decision-making positions within international organisations involved in conflict and reconstruction policy.
- BZ, BZK and the Ministry of Defence will promote an increase in the number of women participating in UN, OSCE, EU and NATO peace and observation missions, in both civilian positions (e.g. interpreters and mediators) and military roles.
- In order to meet the target percentages for deployment of female military personnel, the Ministry of Defence will examine whether special measures can be implemented where recruiting and peace missions are concerned,

for example in relation to application procedures for posts abroad and specific mission arrangements for personnel with children. Regardless of such measures, both male and female applicants will need to meet the same requirements.

- Dutch NGOs support the work of civilian peace missions through international NGOs. Where possible, BZ will stimulate such efforts, provided there is an equal proportion of women, including in management positions, and there is a specific policy of strengthening the position of women in the conflict zone in question.

Box 6. Indian female police unit in Liberia

In February 2007, for only the second time in the history of peace operations, an entirely female police unit was deployed in Liberia. This Indian unit is part of the specialist 'Formed Police Unit' and is comprised of female volunteers from across India, who have experience of counter-insurgency operations in areas such as Kashmir. The unit was deployed specifically for its members' skills in defusing riot situations and for the training of female police officers. The introduction of the Indian female police unit resulted in a huge increase in applications by Liberian women to join the police force.

5 Harmonisation and coordination

The previous four sections have set out the areas in which the signatories to this plan wish to be actively involved, and the activities they plan to undertake in improving the position of women around the world. Before this ambitious plan can be implemented, however, it is essential that efforts in all four areas be coordinated. To this end, agreements should be made in the Netherlands, between the signatories to this action plan. What should the Netherlands do to facilitate effective cooperation in these four areas? First and foremost, we need more research into women, peace and security. We then need to identify the skills and competences that each party has to offer and consider how we can supplement one another most effectively. A coordinating mechanism needs to be established, so that we can cooperate effectively and hold one another to our given responsibilities. This will also foster an atmosphere of mutual support. In addition, reporting on 1325 activities within this joint programme must be closely

monitored and evaluated. Finally, it is important that we communicate with each other, and jointly with the wider world, about the progress we are making on 1325.

Research

The range of dynamics at work in conflict areas, combined with the fact that we are constantly gaining new insights, means that research into the role of women in conflict and post-conflict situations cannot be allowed to stand still. This can only be positive for gender training. There is a clear need for quality research and practical case studies in particular, which will improve current insights into the roles and capacities of women in conflict situations. The signatories to this plan wish to give greater priority in their policy to specific gender training and research.

- BZ will examine whether additional funding can be released for research by NGOs and knowledge institutions, into the role of women in conflict and development. The ministries in question will also work more closely with research institutes which specialise in gender, conflict and reconstruction.
- BZ is working to establish its own research strategy with respect to women, peace and security. Those departments responsible for peacebuilding and gender equality could be tasked with this project. Attention could also be given to the gender issue within the IS Academy (International Cooperation Academy).
- Knowledge institutions and NGOs will, where relevant, establish research programmes on gender, peace and security. In the short term, the knowledge institutions will submit an agenda, prioritising a number of research areas which will include academic subjects as well as those relevant to policy.

Harmonisation

In order to move forward with implementation of the action points set out in this plan, harmonisation and cooperation between the different actors are essential. The signatories to this action plan will incorporate 1325 into their policy and business plans, exchange knowledge and coordinate their efforts as closely as possible. For this reason a mechanism will be established to enable the institutions concerned to maintain an ongoing dialogue about implementation of 1325. This will also give the various partners the opportunity to call one another to account regarding their responsibilities.

- The signatories to this action plan will do their utmost to ensure that the position of women (as well as the gender perspective in general) in conflict or post-conflict situations is reflected in all policy frameworks, policy memorandums, country strategies and other papers which touch on this subject in any way. This national action plan should serve explicitly as the guiding document.
- Where necessary, the signatories to this action plan will extend their staff's knowledge regarding women, peace and security by means of training courses and workshops.
- The signatories to this action plan will jointly establish an adequate coordinating strategy for implementing and monitoring resolution 1325 and this national action plan. This may be by means of a recurring working group comprised of representatives from the institutions concerned. BZ will take responsibility for organising and coordinating this group.

Monitoring and evaluation

To guarantee continued focus on the issue of women, peace and security, and to ensure the quality of security and development efforts and learn lessons from them, it is essential to schedule monitoring and evaluation, aimed specifically at the role of women before, during and after conflict situations. At present, gender-specific information is rarely obtained. This process must be effectively harmonised within the government and with civil society organisations, since there is sometimes no clear overview of the services and types of expertise that are present in a conflict or post-conflict zone.

- The government will examine whether it is possible to conduct a baseline measurement, to determine how much money and how many person-hours its institutions are spending on the implementation of 1325.
- The signatories to this action plan will focus their attention on gender questions when evaluating peace missions and other uses of resources in conflict or post-conflict situations. They will seek specific information on the roles and position of men and women.
- Dutch NGOs will continue to develop instruments for assessing the impact that conflict and reconstruction, and their partner organisations' projects, have on women and women's rights. They will regularly report their findings.
- Dutch NGOs and women's organisations will work together at international level to establish monitoring systems which will keep track of progress on implementing 1325.

- At both national and international level, the signatories to this action plan will remain vigilant that gender and women's rights are not misused as justification for agendas other than those of gender justice.

Amnesty International has established a system for monitoring progress regarding the implementation of EU directives on human rights. In 2006 this instrument was used to conduct the first evaluations in Angola, China, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Russia, Tunisia, Iran and Turkey.

Communication

The action plan's final focus point emphasises the importance of communicating our progress on 1325 to the outside world. That means making clear to the rest of the world that the Netherlands is serious about improving the position of women and recognises women as active partners in achieving any sustainable peace. We as institutions accept that we serve as guarantor of the commitments summarised in this action plan, and accordingly, that we must report openly on the progress we make.

- BZ will work with civil society organisations to produce an international media strategy on women in conflict situations, with the focus on the role of women as actors and not simply as victims. The strategy will also be aimed at increasing support for gender mainstreaming.
- BZ aims to reinstate the '1325 Prize',³² which was first awarded in 2006. It will take up the issue of rotating the responsibility for awarding this prize with its bilateral and multilateral partners.
- The signatories to this action plan will jointly communicate with the wider world as regards progress on implementing 1325.

Finally, the bodies named in this action plan accept responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the action points, and for calling each other to account on their respective progress. The reader is, of course, equally free to request an update on the partners' progress.

³² The '1325 Prize' was established by the Women, Security and Conflict Task Force. The prize is awarded to a person or organisation which has made extraordinary efforts to promote women's rights, and in 2006, was awarded to human rights activist Etweda 'Sugars' Cooper. The intention was to rotate the task of awarding the prize between countries with a national action plan, but the prize has not been awarded again since 2006.

Conclusion

“We all do gender. We do gender every day, every minute, from birth to death.”
- Bunie Matlanyane Sexwale³³

In implementing this national action plan, ‘Taking a stand for women, peace and security’, the Netherlands has set itself an ambitious agenda. Over the next four years and beyond, the abovementioned organisations will work both independently and together to make a difference for women, peace and security around the world. To this end, they will remain in constant dialogue, measure one another’s progress, and above all, support each other wherever possible.

Dutch government agencies, NGOs and knowledge institutions are all, ultimately, working towards the same goal: far-reaching improvement in the position of women in conflict or post-conflict countries. This will be achieved by using human rights instruments, by embedding the role of women into all aspects of the peace and reconstruction process, by cooperating on an international scale and, above all, by letting men and women lead the way in their own, ongoing development.

The adoption of this action plan will spark renewed cooperation between these actors.

Photo: Ralph Dekkers (DRG).



33 Bunie Matlanyane Sexwale, at IFOR WPP’s (International Fellowship of Reconciliation Women Peacemakers Program) ‘Training of Trainers’, 2002, cited in *Just words: quotations on gender, non-violence and peace*, Shelley Anderson ed., (Alkmaar: IFOR, 2005), p. 19.

Action Points Matrix

Focus area	Goal	Activity	Responsible
1. Legal framework	National legislation in conflict and post-conflict areas protects women's rights	Bring national legislation into line with international human rights agreements; call countries to account for violations	BZ
		Protect women's rights in unofficial legal systems	All
	People are trained to tackle human rights violations independently	Promote training among professionals in the justice sector	BZ, NGOs, women's and peace organisations
		Promote legal training for personnel on peace missions	BZ
	Those violating human rights are prosecuted	Condemn impunity and encourage prosecutions	BZ, Defence, BZK, NGOs
		Maintain dialogue with local NGOs, and promote training	BZ, NGOs
	Institutionalised victim support	Monitor security and safety of women during court proceedings	BZ, BZK, Defence, NGOs
		Support the provision of psychosocial counselling	BZ, NGOs

		Violations of women's rights are made public	Offer solidarity and support, promote leadership, strengthen social cohesion	women's and peace organisations
			Promote women's access to the media	BZ, NGOs
			Give women a voice, using international networks	women's and peace organisations
2. Conflict prevention, mediation and reconstruction	The role of women in conflict prevention has been institutionalised		Establish a dialogue on stability among signatories	All (BZ will coordinate)
			Promote knowledge sharing	All (BZ will coordinate)
			Promote equal representation of women in negotiations	All
	The role of women in mediation has been institutionalised		Regular consultations to determine the role of women in specific cases	BZ, NGOs
			Involve trained, local women in mediation activities	BZ, NGOs
		Take account of the needs of women in DDR	BZ, Defence, BZK, NGOs	
	The role of women in reconstruction has been institutionalised		Promote the establishment of non-military DDR processes	BZ, NGOs



	for women who have not actively participated in the armed conflict	
	Establish and promote DDR programmes aimed at reintegration	NGOs, BZ
	Admission to and training of women in all security institutions	BZ, Defence, BZK
	Signatories' contacts to facilitate women's role in SSR	All (BZ will coordinate)
	Share experience, expertise and knowledge with SSR practitioners	women's and peace organisations
	Projects and activities to stimulate greater involvement of women in reconciliation	NGOs
	Activities to support networks of local women for reconciliation	women's and peace organisations
Women can take control of their own development	Gender-specific needs assessment in programmes. Provide access for women	BZ, NGOs
	Embassies to identify projects relating to 1325	BZ

		Appoint gender experts at missions	BZ
		Appoint gender focal points at embassies	BZ
		Maintain gender perspective in the Stability Fund	BZ
		Capacity building re. women in decision-making, reform etc.	BZ
		Promote equal property, land and inheritance rights for women	BZ, NGOs, women's and peace organisations
		Training for women, including in SRHR (Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights)	BZ, NGOs
3. International cooperation	Further implementation of 1325 within international and multilateral organisations	Raise the issue of implementation of 1325 within all available international forums	All
		Press for women's participation in conflict prevention, mediation, etc.	BZ, Defence, BZK, NGOs
		Improve provision of information about Dutch policy	BZ

		<p>International efforts to implement 1325 are more closely harmonised</p>	<p>Request European Commission attention for the issue. Press for European Action Plan on 1325</p> <p>International cooperation and harmonisation with other NGOs and women's networks, aimed at European action plan</p> <p>Raise the question of national action plans at bilateral level</p> <p>Offer support in promoting the application of a gender perspective within international organisations</p> <p>Stimulate international academic research into women, peace and security</p> <p>Support reforms in the UN gender architecture</p>	<p>BZ</p> <p>NGOs</p> <p>BZ</p> <p>BZ, Defence, BZK</p> <p>knowledge institutions</p> <p>BZ</p>
4. Peace missions	The role of women is embedded in our approach to peace missions		<p>Promote the inclusion of 1325 in resolutions, mandates and terms of reference</p>	<p>BZ</p>

	Promote the embedding of a role for women in UN, NATO and EU operational guidelines	BZ, Defence, BZK
	Inclusion of 1325 in all operations supported or conducted by the Netherlands	BZ, Defence
Peacekeepers conduct themselves according to applicable standards	Maintaining codes of conduct	BZ, Defence, BZK
	Call foreign partners to account on conduct during peace missions	BZ, Defence
Participants in peace missions have appropriate gender expertise at their disposal	Promote the establishment of local focal points to whom poor conduct can be reported	Defence
	Provide specific training on roles and capabilities of women	All
	Support position of functional gender specialists	BZ, Defence, BZK
	Assign gender experts to short missions	BZ, Defence
Male-female relations within peacekeeping force are in balance.	Press for more focus on gender training within international institutions and NGOs	BZ, Defence, BZK, NGOs

			<p>Promote recruitment of more women by international organisations</p> <p>Promote appointment of more women to civilian and military roles on missions</p> <p>Examine whether recruitment and posting of female troops can be made easier</p> <p>Support civilian peace missions</p>	<p>BZ, Defence, BZK</p> <p>BZ, Defence, BZK</p> <p>Defence</p> <p>NGOs, women's and peace organisations, BZ</p>
	5. Harmonisation and coordination	Research into women, peace and security has been intensified	<p>Examine whether funding for research can be increased</p> <p>Closer cooperation with knowledge institutions</p> <p>Draw up a research strategy on women, peace and security</p> <p>Develop research programmes</p>	<p>BZ</p> <p>BZ, Defence, BZK</p> <p>BZ</p> <p>knowledge institutions, NWO³⁴, NGOs</p>

Harmonisation and cooperation between the signatories has improved	Embed the position of women in conflict and post-conflict countries in policy	BZ, Defence, BZK, NGOs
	Organise gender training courses and workshops for staff	All
	Ensure an active exchange within civil society	NGOs (social change networks)
	Establish a coordination structure for implementing and monitoring 1325	All (BZ will coordinate)
	Examine whether a baseline measurement can be carried out	BZ, Defence, BZK
	Make gender-specific evaluations and reports	All
Implementation of 1325 is monitored and evaluated more effectively	Develop instruments for measuring the impact of conflict on women	NGOs
	International cooperation aimed at the establishment of a monitoring system	NGOs, women's and peace organisations
	Guard against misuse of women's rights for agendas other than gender justice	All



Communication regarding the implementation of 1325 has been improved

Establish international media strategy for women, peace and security

BZ, NGOs

Promote resumption of the 1325 Prize

BZ

Joint external communication regarding progress with implementation

All

Abbreviations

BZ – Ministry of Foreign Affairs

BZK – Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations

CIMIC – Civil-Military Cooperation

DDR – Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration

DPKO – Department of Peacekeeping Operations (UN)

DSI/ER - Emancipation and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights Division
of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

ICC - International Criminal Court

IDP - Internally Displaced Person

IMF - International Monetary Fund

MDGs - Millennium Development Goals

NGO - Non-Governmental Organisation

OECD - Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

SRHR – Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

SSR - Security Sector Reform

ToR - Terms of Reference

UNIFEM - United Nations Development Fund for Women

UN-INSTRAW - United Nations International Research and Training Institute for
the Advancement of Women

WHO - World Health Organisation

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National action plans

Canada:

Towards a Canadian National Action Plan to implement Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security
http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/foreign_policy/human-rights/pdf/Women_PeaceSecurity-en.pdf.

Denmark:

Danske initiativer til national og international gennemførelse af Sikkerhedsrådsresolution 1325 om Kvinder, Fred og Sikkerhed (only available in Danish)
<http://forsvaret.dk/NR/rdonlyres/BFA01660-285B-416E-BFB7-2A0E8E0g8ED5/16352/FMogUMfællesnotatFN1325.pdf>.

Norway:

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<http://www.peacewomen.org/national/Sweden.pdf>.

Switzerland:

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft: National Action Plan for the Implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security
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Annexes

Resolution 1325 (2000)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting, on 31 October 2000

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President, and recalling also the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace (International Women's Day) of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and *stressing* the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard *noting* the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. *Urges* Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;
2. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

3. Urges the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;
4. Further urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;
5. Expresses its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;
6. Requests the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment, and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;
7. Urges Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;
8. Calls on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:
 - (a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;
 - (b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;
10. *Calls on* all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;
11. *Emphasizes* the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;
12. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;
13. *Encourages* all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;
14. *Reaffirms* its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential

impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. Expresses its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;
16. Invites the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;
17. Requests the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;
18. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

Recommendations from the final document of the Women, Security and Conflict Task Force

Although the Women, Security and Conflict Task Force has been officially disbanded, and although a great deal has been achieved in recent years, the practical implementation of a gender-based approach to post-conflict reconstruction calls for continued efforts from politicians, civil servants and civil society. The Women, Security and Conflict Task Force addresses the following recommendations to these groups and, in particular, to the government:

At national level:

- BZ should be responsible for coordinating all activities relating to women, security and conflict (Human Rights and Peacebuilding Department, Security Policy Department and Social and Institutional Development Department).
- Under BZ's leadership, an adequate coordination structure should be established for monitoring the implementation of resolution 1325 by all relevant ministries and other actors in conflict and post-conflict countries. Human resources and funds should be released for this purpose.
- Cooperation between BZK, BZ and the Ministry of Defence in establishing and carrying out peace missions could be strengthened. Mandates should pay specific attention to resolution 1325.
- Resolution 1325 should be integrated into all policy relating to conflict or post-conflict countries.
- Civilian personnel, the police and military should be equipped with sufficient resources and knowledge to be able to integrate gender considerations in their work and during postings abroad.
- Where research is concerned:
 - more funding is required for research into gender and conflict;
 - the relevant ministries should lobby for funding at national and international level.

At international level, the Netherlands should serve as a leader and role model. In this context:

- Cooperation between various UN and EU organisations regarding implementation of resolution 1325 should be promoted and monitored.
- The provision of information regarding Dutch gender policy as it relates to security and conflict needs to be improved at UN, EU and NATO level.
- The Netherlands should lobby the European Commission for more focus on women and conflict, and for the creation of relevant indicators.
- As regards regular monitoring and evaluations:
 - The government should inform the House of Representatives annually regarding progress in the implementation of resolution 1325.
 - There should be a greater focus on gender issues in evaluations of peace missions.
 - The central government budget should make explicit reference to funding earmarked for the implementation of gender policy.

The Pact of Schokland

30 June 2007

On 30 June 2007, the Dutch government joined civil society organisations, companies, agencies and institutions, unions, churches and individual citizens for the signing of the Pact of Schokland. All expressed the wish to make concerted, active efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

In 2000 government leaders from 189 countries agreed to halve the world's poverty by 2015. They laid down eight concrete goals:

The Millennium Development Goals

Eight concrete commitments on combating poverty around the world

The subjects covered by the Millennium Development Goals are not new. But this was the first time that the international community had reached an agreement with concrete, measurable goals. Every year, progress is measured and reported internationally. This means that pressure can be exerted on both rich and poor countries to step up their efforts.

The Netherlands was one of those 189 countries. The Dutch government subscribed to the goals on behalf of us all. We have now reached the halfway point to 2015. In some areas, progress has been achieved, but in many countries we are well behind schedule. We cannot accept this; we will not accept this. We believe that something can be done, something must be done, and that we must do it together.

We,

Amnesty International Netherlands

the Centre for Conflict Studies of the University of Utrecht

ICCO (Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation) and Kerk in Actie (Church in Action)

Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO) (Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research)

Platform Vrouwen Duurzame Vrede (Platform for Women and Sustainable Peace)

People Building Peace Netherlands

Stichting Nederlandse Vrijwilligers (SNV) (SNV Netherlands Development Organisation)

WO=MEN, Dutch Gender Platform

European Centre for Conflict Prevention (ECCP)
Euro's voor Vrede (Euros for Peace)
Humanistisch Vredesberaad (Humanist Peace Forum), Kerk en Vrede (Church and Peace),
Nederlands Expertise Centrum Alternatieven voor Geweld (NEAG) (NEAG Alternatives to Violence)
Oxfam Novib
UNOY Peacebuilders
War Child Netherlands
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Netherlands) (WILPF)
Business & Professional Women the Netherlands (BPW NL)
IFOR (International Fellowship of Reconciliation) Women Peacemakers Programme (WPP)
Multicultural Women Peacemakers Network-Netherlands (MWPN)
Nederlandse Vrouwenraad (NVR) (Dutch Women's Council)
Vrouwen voor Vrede (Women for Peace)
Vrouwen Organisatie Nederland-Darfur (VOND) Netherlands-Darfur Women's Organisation
Gender Concerns International
Peacebrokers
The Minister of Defence
The Minister of Education, Culture and Science
The Minister for Development Cooperation

support the Millennium Development Goals and promise to work actively to achieve them by 2015. We feel a specific responsibility for Millennium Development Goal 3 (equal opportunities and rights for men and women). This is why we stand together.

Taking a stand for peace and security

The Dutch National Action Plan on Resolution 1325:

Women, Peace and Security

War and conflict are an everyday reality. Scenes of conflict in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq and the Horn of Africa are in the news almost every day. There are countless victims, including whole communities. In the last century, civilians as well as soldiers have become the victims of war. In fact, as many as 90% of the people killed in conflicts are civilians, of whom 70% are women and children. Yet women are no longer seen purely as victims: in recent years, there has been

greater recognition of the role women play in conflict, conflict prevention and resolution and reconstruction.

Reconstruction offers many opportunities for achieving social change. In practice, however, chances to make lasting changes and improvements are still being missed because women are excluded from decision-making processes on the future of their countries.

By working to improve the position of women in fragile states, the right conditions can also be created for the achievement of *all* the Millennium Development Goals. Achieving the other goals depends in part on the progress made towards Millennium Development Goal 3.

Women and fragile states, then, are two areas in which Dutch society can contribute something extra to bringing the world closer to achieving all eight Millennium Development Goals.

Below we have indicated the efforts and/or contributions that we are committing ourselves to in signing the Pact of Schokland.

Our aim is to take a number of interrelated measures to improve and strengthen the position of women during and after armed conflict. We want to achieve this by drawing up a Dutch National Action Plan to carry out UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The goal is to obtain systematic attention for, and recognition and support of, the role of women in conflict situations.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 includes a number of related themes. The Dutch Action Plan will identify action points relating to five focus areas: (1) the legal framework, (2) conflict prevention, mediation and reconstruction, (3) international cooperation, (4) peace missions and (5) harmonisation and coordination.

The Dutch partners named here have expressed their intention, with due consideration for one another's role, mandate and expertise, to support the formulation and implementation of a Dutch National Action Plan on 1325. Such support may include knowledge, time or resources.

The first step will be one of consultation and consensus between all Dutch

partners on the precise formulation of the Dutch National Action Plan on 1325. The result should be clear and concrete agreements regarding responsibilities, competences and monitoring in the area of women, peace and security. To this end, two points are of particular importance:

1. setting down the action points and
2. setting out responsibilities, time frames and expected results.

The intention is to present the Dutch National Action Plan on 1325 at the end of 2007. The second step is aimed at the joint implementation of the plan. Since the plan sets out who is responsible for each action point, monitoring and evaluation can determine whether the expected results are achieved within the time-frame specified. Where necessary, action points may be adjusted, provided this is done in good time. It is also important that the Dutch partners undertake activities and, where appropriate, work together to keep UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on the political and social agenda and to generate support for its implementation.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs further expresses its intention to work more closely with research institutes on the subject of gender and conflict. The partners also aim to join forces with all researchers and institutes that are active in this field.

We authorise the initiators of the Pact of Schokland to remind us periodically of what we have pledged.

The Pact of Schokland

4 December 2007

On 30 June 2007, the Dutch government joined civil society organisations, companies, agencies and institutions, unions, churches and individual citizens for the signing of the Pact of Schokland. All wish to make concerted, active efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. They agreed to collaborate in writing a Dutch National Action Plan on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security.

Now, five months on, the partners have come together once more for the presentation of the Dutch National Action Plan on 1325 and the signing of the second Pact of Schokland, the follow-up to the original agreement. In signing the second Pact, the partners show that they are willing to make an active contribution to implementing the Dutch National Action Plan on 1325.

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the Centre for Conflict Studies, University of Utrecht

the Department of Social Sciences, Wageningen University

Cordaid (Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid)

ICCO (Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation) and *Kerk in Actie*
(Church in Action)

Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO) (Netherlands
Organisation for Scientific Research)

Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights (WGNRR)

Platform Vrouwen Duurzame Vrede (Platform for Women and Sustainable Peace), on
behalf of:

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (Netherlands)
(WILPF).

Business & Professional Women the Netherlands (BPW NL)

IFOR Women Peacemakers Programme (WPP)

Multicultural Women Peacemakers Network-Netherlands (MWPN)

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Organisation)

Gender Concerns International
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Humanistisch Vredesberaad (Humanist Peace Forum), *Kerk en Vrede* (Church and
Peace)

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WO=MEN, Dutch Gender Platform
The Minister of Defence
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Taking a stand for peace and security

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By working to improve the position of women in fragile states, the right conditions can also be created for the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals. Achieving the other goals depends in part on the progress made towards Millennium Development Goal 3. Women and fragile states, then, are two areas in which Dutch society can contribute something extra to bringing the world closer to achieving all eight Millennium Development Goals.

For this reason, on 30 June 2007, we set as our goal the implementation of a number of interrelated measures to improve and strengthen the position of women during and after armed conflict. We have drawn up a Dutch National

Action Plan on 1325, based on UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The aim of this action plan is to guarantee systematic attention for, and recognition and support of, the role of women in conflict situations. The Dutch action plan identifies action points relating to five focus areas: (1) the legal framework, (2) conflict prevention, mediation and reconstruction, (3) international cooperation, (4) peace missions and (5) harmonisation and coordination.

The Dutch partners named here have expressed their intention, with due consideration for one another's role, mandate and expertise, to support the implementation of the Dutch National Action Plan on 1325 by providing knowledge, time or resources. In this way UN Security Council Resolution 1325 will remain on the political and social agenda, and support for its implementation will be strengthened.

We authorise the initiators of the Pact of Schokland to remind us periodically of what we have pledged.



Buitenlandse
Zaken

Defensie

Ministerie van Binnenlandse Zaken en Koninkrijksrelaties



International Fellowship of Reconciliation
Internationaler Vereinigungsbund
Mouvement International de la Reconciliation
Moviment Internacional de la Reconciliación
The International Fellowship of Reconciliation (IFOR) is an international, spiritually based movement composed of people who commit themselves to active nonviolence as a way of life and as a means of reconciliation - globally, with nations and peoples.
IFOR has been in close contact with the United Nations since 1958 and 1962/63.



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