

Beyond Words and Resolutions: An Agenda for UNSCR 1325

Donald Steinberg, Women and War: Power and Protection | 30 Jun 2010

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For advocates of the empowerment and protection of women in conflict situations, these are heady times. The past two years have seen a growing international awareness not only of the personal costs to women for our failure to protect them in the context of armed conflict, but also of the tremendous collective costs we pay as a global community for failing to achieve our goals of building peace, pursuing development, and reconstructing post-conflict societies. The result of this awareness has been a spate of UN Security Council resolutions, national action plans, impressive speeches, and structural changes that have hopefully set the stage for real progress.

It is tragic that it has taken graphic images of women raped in the eastern Congo, and young girls with acid thrown in their faces in Afghanistan for daring to return to school to shame our collective conscience, but the world is responding. At the United Nations, UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict has been formed to coordinate enhanced work by thirteen dozen separate agencies under the tagline, "Stop Rape Now."^[i] Security Council resolutions – 1820, 1888, and 1889 in particular – have created an office of a special representative for eliminating violence against women, mandated new measures of accountability, called for structures to name and shame offending parties, authorized the use of UN sanctions in such cases, and defined widespread sexual violence itself as a threat to international peace and security.^[ii]

No Security Council peacekeeping mandate can be passed now without a paragraph requiring forceful civilian protection, especially for women. The anticipated creation of a new UN gender entity has the potential to end the disarray that has bedeviled the efforts of the UN Development Fund for Women, the Special Advisor for Gender Issues, the Division for the Advancement of Women and their sister agencies, if key steps are taken to ensure its effectiveness and relevance. The same promise and caveats apply to the High-Level Steering Committee for Women, Peace and Security, chaired by Deputy Secretary-General Asha Rose Migiros, and is backed by a civil society advisory group led by former Irish President Mary Robinson and head of the Femmes Africa Solidarite Bineta Diop.

Other international and regional organizations – notably the European Union, the African Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe – are taking similar steps. The EU has adopted a "comprehensive approach" for implementing resolutions 1325 and 1820, which includes provisions for building political will, training political and military officials, exchanging information on best practices, cooperating with international actors, monitoring and evaluation.^[iii] The EU is also articulating an action plan on gender equality and women's empowerment, complementing national action plans adopted by nine EU

member states. The Spanish Presidency in the first half of 2010 made gender considerations in the context of armed conflict prevention one of its top priorities. The EU has reached out to civil society groups, including the European Peacebuilding Liaison Office, with which it is developing indicators for it to use on gender considerations.

The Nordic countries have long shown the way in this agenda, but now they are joined by other governments. In the United States, a fortified and re-energized office for global women's affairs was established at the State Department under respected activist Melanne Verveer. New programs within USAID and the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration, and the leadership of President Barack Obama, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and UN Ambassador Susan Rice are encouraging. Secretary Clinton highlighted the tragedy of sexual violence during her first visit to Africa, reaffirming the centrality of gender issues to the achievement of U.S. foreign policy objectives globally. In Congress, Senator John Kerry, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and Congressman Bill Delahunt have sponsored and gained new support for the International Violence Against Women Act, legislation that outlines comprehensive measures to strengthen U.S. and UN initiatives on these issues. A former sponsor, Vice President Joseph Biden, is in a new position to push for its enactment.

But against this backdrop, two "inconvenient" questions bedevil us. First, has this effort had any tangible effect on the ground? Substantive and anecdotal evidence suggests that we are making little progress against sexual abuse, impunity and systematic disengagement of women in conflict situations. Rape continues to be used unabated as a weapon of war. The voices of women are still excluded from peace tables, resulting in agreements that ill reflect ground truth and fail to bring lasting peace as often as they succeed. Issues related to trafficking in persons, reproductive health care, girls' education and accountability for past abuses continue to be lost in the shuffle. Warring parties still frequently begin peace processes by granting amnesties to each other for heinous crimes committed in the fighting – tantamount to men with guns forgiving other men with guns for atrocities taken against women.

A second nagging doubt is whether the expression of political will by senior policy-makers has been translated into a higher priority for gender considerations when national security policies are adopted. Regrettably, strategic decisions are still generally taken with little if any regard for their impact on women. In the eastern Congo, for example, regional powers were backed by the world's super-powers and even the United Nations in attacks in 2009 against the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda and the Lord's Resistance Army. These are indeed horrendous groups, but the attacks produced few if any strategic gains against them and were structured so as to virtually invite massive retaliation against the local population. The predictable results were targeted rapes against women and massive displacement of hundreds of thousands women-led households. And it was not just the retaliation of renegade forces that violated international humanitarian law: the very Congolese and Ugandan forces who led the attacks are themselves charged with brutal human rights abuses against women. Similarly, in Afghanistan, we still hear domestic and even international policy-makers argue that long-term security and counter-insurgency efforts depend upon winning the support of warlords, traditional leaders and even Taliban figures, whom we cannot afford to alienate through an over-emphasis on women's rights and protection.

Thus, the real challenges we face are how to translate our growing awareness and activism into concrete improvements on the ground, both by prioritizing these issues in the corridors of power and by ensuring the adoption and implementation of effective programs and projects with rapid impact.

The Promise of UNSC Resolution 1325

To design an action agenda for UNSC Resolution 1325, it is important to view the resolution in its proper historical context. Based on the Namibia Plan of Action on “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations”, adopted in Windhoek in May 2000, the resolution’s eighteen articles called for greater representation of women in national decision making, especially in prevention and resolution of conflict; incorporation of a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations; new financial and logistical support for gender dimensions of peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction; greater consideration of women and girls in resettlement, rehabilitation, and demobilization programs; respect for women’s human rights and an end to impunity for crimes against women; new efforts to combat sexual violence in armed conflict; and greater consultations with local and international women’s groups.^[iv]

But Resolution 1325 was a product of its times. It reflected a clear cautiousness among the Security Council members in 2000 about wading into thematic issues and a lack of confidence in declaring that these issues themselves constituted a threat to international peace and security. Thus, its language is hortatory rather than directive: it “urges,” “encourages,” “requests,” and “invites” rather than “demands” or “instructs.” The resolution lacks time-bound targets for achieving its goals, accountability or measurement provisions to secure its implementation, working groups or special representatives to monitor and prod action, new funding or personnel dedicated to the issue, reporting mechanisms vis-à-vis the Security Council, watchlists of countries failing to meet its objectives as a naming and shaming exercise, or provisions for sanctions against state and non-state violators. Contrast this approach with that of UNSC Resolution 1612 on children and armed conflict, which was passed five years later and included each of these provisions.

Some observers believe that these gaps doomed Resolution 1325 from the outset. This is unfair. As documented elsewhere in this volume, there has been notable progress within UN structures, especially in terms of awareness, expansion of the numbers and roles for gender advisors, gender training gender for peacekeepers and senior officials, adoption of some outstanding guidelines for field action, development of small-scale and in-situ programs, and more. But the approaching tenth anniversary of the resolution reminds us that its promise is still largely a dream deferred for women in conflict. There is a growing realization that October 2010 must not be a celebration, nor even a stock-taking exercise, but an impetus for urgent new action to address the most serious problems. Concrete steps, elaborated below, must be taken to bring women to the peace table, expand assistance for gender-related post-conflict reconstruction, empower the soon-to-be-established UN women’s entity, strengthen women’s associations in conflict-affected countries, mandate time-bound goals and accountability mechanisms for implementing the resolution, protect displaced women from sexual abuse, engage women in security sectors, and use moral suasion to force member states to make formal commitments to specific actions over the next three years to

promote the resolution's provisions.

Where We Are; Where We Need to Go

In preparing for the second decade of action under Resolution 1325, UN officials have recognized that the United Nations can accomplish little unless it partners with member states and activists from around the world who can bring their expertise, experience, and especially ground-truth to this exercise. One key step has been the appointment of a fourteen-member UN Civil Society Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security, fourteen independent experts to advise senior UN officials on ways to better protect women in conflict situations, and to ensure that their voices are heard in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction and governance structures." [v] Its mandate and methodology are instructive.

As a first step, the advisory group is assessing the status of implementation of Resolution 1325: what has worked well; what has worked at the local or grass-roots level but has not been replicated elsewhere or brought to scale; and where we have simply failed to meet our commitment.

Second, the advisory group will establish realistic and achievable time-bound goals for the areas of improvement identified. For example, what percentage of women do we need sitting at peace tables by what year? What reduction in sexual violence around UN-run camps for refugees and internally-displaced persons must we achieve and by when? What portion of funds contributed at post-conflict donors conferences must be dedicated to gender-based projects, such as reproductive health care and girls' education? The advisory group is supporting UN efforts to identify to devise indicators to measure these outcomes, provisions to identify the entities and individuals are responsible for achieving them, and accountability mechanisms to put pressure behind their implementation.

Finally, the advisory group is addressing the principal constraints to progress by assessing the institutional changes needed within the UN, other international and regional organizations and member states to facilitate progress. It is also addressing the need for additional financial and personnel resources, including a quick-disbursing trust fund available to UN officials leading peacekeeping mission to facilitate rapid response to impending situations of sexual violence or other abuses. The advisory group is also serving as a catalyst to bring the voices and ground-truth of women impacted by armed conflict to the attention of global decision-makers.

A Cautionary Tale from Angola

Before turning to the specific measures that should comprise the action agenda for UNSC Resolution 1325 for the next decade, it is also instructive to review a practical example of the costs of failing to involve women in peace processes. In this regard, my experience in Angola provides a cautionary tale for our efforts.

In 1994, while serving as President Clinton's special assistant for African Affairs, I supported negotiations to end two decades of civil war in Angola that had killed a half million people and left four million homeless. When the Lusaka Protocol was signed,[vi] I was asked by a journalist how the agreement took into account the needs of war-affected women. "Not a

single provision in the agreement discriminates against women,” I said, a little too proudly. “The agreement is gender-neutral.”

President Clinton then named me ambassador to Angola. It took me only a few weeks after my arrival in Luanda in June 1995 to realize that a peace agreement that calls itself “gender-neutral” is, by definition, discriminatory against women and likely to fail.

First, the agreement did not require the participation of women in the Joint Commission, the peace implementation body. As a result, a typical meeting of the commission saw 40 men and no women sitting around the table. This imbalance silenced women’s voices and meant that issues such as sexual violence, human trafficking, abuses by government and rebel security forces, reproductive health care, and girls’ education were given short shrift, if addressed at all.

The peace accord was based on thirteen separate amnesties that forgave the parties for atrocities committed during the conflict. One amnesty went so far as to forgive the parties for any action they might take in the coming months. Given the prominence of sexual abuse during the conflict, the amnesties introduced cynicism at the heart of our efforts to rebuild the justice and security sectors. In effect, it showed Angolan women, as well as other key civil society actors, that the peace process was intended for the benefit of the ex-combatants and not them.

Similarly, demobilization programs for ex-combatants depended on lists provided by the warring parties. As a rule, they defined a combatant as anyone who carried a gun in combat. Thousands of women who had been kidnapped or coerced into the armed forces and served as cooks, bearers, messengers and even sex slaves (so-called “bush wives”) were largely excluded. Further, camps for demobilized soldiers and even for displaced persons were rarely constructed with women in mind, such that women risked rape or death each time they left the camp to collect firewood or used latrines in isolated and dimly-lit settings.

Male ex-combatants received demobilization assistance, but were sent back without skills or education to communities that had learned to live without them during decades of conflict.

As in all such situations, the frustration of these men exploded into an epidemic of alcoholism, drug abuse, divorce, rape and domestic violence. This was especially true for young boys, who had never learned how to interact on an equal basis with girls their own ages. In effect, the end of civil war simply unleashed a new era of violence against women and girls.

Even such well-intentioned efforts as clearing major roads of landmines to allow four million displaced persons to return to their homes backfired against women. Road clearance sometimes preceded the demining of fields, wells and forests, resulting in premature resettlement and return. As women in this environment went out to plant the fields, fetch water and collect firewood, they suffered a new rash of landmine accidents.

Over time, we recognized these problems and brought out gender advisers and human rights officers; launched programs in reproductive health care, girls’ education, micro-enterprise, and support for women’s NGOs; and involved women in planning and implementing all our programs. But by then, civil society – and particularly women – had come to view the peace

process as serving only the interests of the warring parties. When the process faltered in 1998, largely because of the intransigence of rebel leader Jonas Savimbi, there was little public pressure on the leaders to prevent a return to conflict, and war soon re-emerged. Permanent peace only came when Savimbi was killed in February 2002.

A key lesson from this experience is that peace itself is not enough to protect and empower women. How we make peace determines whether the end of armed conflict means a safer world for women or simply ushers in a different and in some cases more pernicious era of violence against them.

Sadly, we have not learned this lesson very well, as shown by developments in Afghanistan. Given the Taliban's abhorrent record on women's rights during its reign, it is stunning that that the insurgents are scoring some debate points by arguing that women in Afghanistan today suffer more broadly from the lack of security, corruption, rights abuses and civilian casualties.^[vii] Indeed, advances in political participation by women and school attendance by girls have been offset by a failure to insist on accountability for warlords whose forces committed sexual violence during the years of conflict and continue such abuse today. Instead, a number of these criminals have been given positions of power.

The murder of women leaders and human rights defenders in Afghanistan and the failure of the government to identify and prosecute their assailants underline the impression of a lack of national commitment to women's rights. Not only has the administration of Hamid Karzai failed to publicly articulate a vision of women's rights that is both home-grown and consistent with traditional Afghan Islamic society, but it has treated women's rights as a bargaining chip to win support from traditional leaders. Thus, it has ceded the debate to those who erroneously argue that such efforts are an alien concept imposed on Afghanistan by foreigners and their Afghan "puppets."

An Action Plan for Revitalizing UNSC Resolution 1325

We can no longer afford to exclude the talents and insights of half the population in the pursuit of peace or to treat them as mere victims. Eight specific actions should be prioritized.

First, those charged with leading and supporting peace processes, especially mediators from the UN and regional bodies, should commit to bring women to the table as peace negotiations are conducted and peace agreements are implemented. Around the world, talented women peace builders face discrimination in legal, cultural and traditional practices, and threats of violence make even the most courageous women think twice before stepping forward. Ground-breaking research under Anne-Marie Goetz, chief advisor for governance, peace and security at UNIFEM, suggests that only one in thirteen participants in peace negotiations since 1992 has been a woman.^[viii] Recent accords in Indonesia, Nepal, Somalia, Cote d'Ivoire, the Philippines and the Central African Republic have not had a single woman signatory, mediator, or negotiator. Of 300 peace agreements negotiated since 1989, just eighteen contain even a passing reference to sexual violence. Peace accords on Bosnia, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia – where such violence was a dominant feature of the fighting – are silent on this issue.

The usual rejoinder is that there simply are not women capable of participating in these

processes due to the male domination of security and conflict resolution issues. And yet in many of the affected regions, it is women who serve as the mediators of disputes at the community levels; in others, educated and successful women are active in sectors involving similar negotiations, including government, business, law, and academics.^[ix] In northern Uganda, for example, women's associations such as the Teso Women's Peace Association, Kitgum Women's Peace Initiative and Gulu District Women's Development Committee groups have played a key role in local dispute settlement and as peace activists, yet were excluded from negotiations between the Ugandan government and the Lord's Resistance Army. In Sudan, the systematic exclusion of women from peace negotiations on Darfur in particular has contributed to the failure of all accords, including the May 2006 Darfur Peace Agreement, notwithstanding the existence of a vast pool of talented and educated Sudanese women, including graduates of the remarkable Afhad University in Khartoum, where some 5,000 women are currently training.

The Security Council must insist that the mandate for every UN peacekeeping mission protects women peacebuilders by providing them personal security and promotes their participation through training, financial stipends, and other means. The Council should demand that negotiations led by the UN include a critical mass of qualified women on all sides – starting at 25 per cent – even if it takes quotas to do so.^[x] Critics charged that such quotas are an aberration and represent reverse discrimination, but in fact, they are now the norm around the world: for example, political parties and national legislatures in more than 100 countries have quotas for female candidates for elected office.

Second, bilateral contributors and multilateral institutions should insist that post-conflict recovery packages prioritize issues of importance to women, in particular reproductive health care and girls' education. In emergency funding projects to support 23 post-conflict situations since 2006, only 3 per cent included specific funding for women and girls^[xi] – this despite our knowledge that girls' education, for example, is one of the best investments in promoting stable societies, reducing unwanted pregnancies, improving agricultural methods, and eliminating sexual violence. It has been said: "Educate a boy and you help a person; educate a girl and you help a community."

Donors should also help women to attain economic independence through land ownership, micro-enterprise and skills training. All post-conflict recovery plans should be subjected to gender-impact analysis and specify the funds dedicated to women's needs. At the same time, gender considerations must be mainstreamed, such that the health minister views reproductive health care as a top priority, the commerce minister promotes women's engagement in all levels of business activity, the education minister stresses girls' education from primary to tertiary levels, and so on. Women's issues are too important to be left to the women's ministry alone.

Third, the countries most instrumental in creating the new UN women's entity must ensure that it has the power, resources, and global reach to make a real difference. The creation of this office was a Faustian bargain: advocates abandoned their dream of a single agency with global reach and a billion dollars in dedicated funding, a so-called "UNICEF for Women." In exchange, the General Assembly agreed to create a high-level office to oversee the significant but often competing contributions of UNIFEM, the Special Adviser for Gender Issues, the

Division for the Advancement of Women, and other bodies, and to raise the profile of women's issues at the UN Secretariat in New York and in UN missions abroad. The EU and U.S. in particular must extend generous voluntary contributions and political support needed for the head of this office to be a forceful and ever-present advocate throughout the UN system and beyond. The new under-secretary-general must be a world-class figure, with the capacity to generate public attention, mobilize political will among governments and "work" the UN system. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon must give her – yes, it should be a woman – the respect and resources needed to do her job, including direct access to the General Assembly and Security Council.

Fourth, bilateral donors and multilateral institutions should expand assistance for private women's groups in conflict-affected countries. Civil society organizations are often the first victims of the polarization that accompanies internal armed conflicts. Women must have the institutional strength to influence local and global decisions that impact their lives. They should identify women's organizations as local implementing partners for projects: contracts for the distribution of humanitarian assistance, dispute resolution and election monitoring can be of even greater support than programs directed specifically at institutional strengthening, especially if accompanied by mentoring programs. The principle must be: "Nothing about us without us."

The training provided by the NGO, "Pact", is instructive. Among its other programs, Pact organizes long-term training and mentoring program for promising local non-governmental organizations in the basics of management, grant proposal drafting, bookkeeping to international standards, and so on, and then supports these NGOs throughout their development process.^[xii] In 2009, Pact assisted more than 12,000 organizations in 62 countries, including groundbreaking women's empowerment projects under its "Worth" program.

Fifth, the Security Council must demand that the UN adopt time-bound goals backed by monitoring, accountability provisions and enforcement mechanisms for reducing violence against women, ensuring participation of women in peace processes, providing reconstruction resources to projects of interest to women, and the like. The UN is currently engaging in a useful exercise to identify indicators in this regard in line with Resolution 1889, but the process must go further in mandating rewards for UN institutions and individuals for achieving these objectives and punishment for failing to do so. Further, to bring Resolution 1325 up to date, the Security Council should establish a permanent working group on sexual violence; a watch-list of countries and non-state actors of concern to be named and shamed into improving their records; periodic reports by the Secretary-General to the Security Council on these issues; and the enshrined principle that sanctions can be imposed on governments and non-state actors that abuse or fail to protect women. Similar measures should be prioritized at regional organizations, including the African Union, the Organization of American States and ASEAN.

Sixth, international humanitarian community should join together to protect one of the most vulnerable groups in conflict: those displaced from their homes and seeking refuge in camps for refugees and internally-displaced persons (IDPs). A priority should be to prevent the rape of women and girls during the collection of fuel; an expansion of livelihood, health, and

education programs; mainstreaming of psycho-social considerations in all protection and services; training for camp managers and protection forces alike; proper configuration of camps and engagement of women refugees and IDPs in decision-making on these issues. Excellent guidelines are now in place from various UN bodies, including the High Commissioner for Refugees, on gender-based violence interventions in these humanitarian settings.^[xiii] However, knowledge of these guidelines is incomplete and sometimes non-existent among host governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), displaced persons, peacekeeping forces and even implementing UN agencies. The systematic implementation is even sketchier, reflecting not only a lack of knowledge and familiarity with the guidelines, but also inadequate financial and personnel resources, lack of high-level attention and prioritization, weak coordination, the absence of goals and indicators needed to hold individuals and institutions accountable.^[xiv]

The global body for official humanitarian agencies, the UN Inter-Agency Standing Committee, recently adopted guidance on addressing rape in the context of firewood collection, including the provision of cooking fuel in humanitarian settings, based on recommendations from the Women's Refugee Commission and other advocacy groups.^[xv] The donor community should ensure funding to implement these provisions fully, starting with the high-risk regions of Sudan, Chad, eastern Congo, and the huge Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya.

Seventh, leading external supporters of security sector reform in post-conflict situations – the EU, U.S. and UN in particular – should ensure that their support to rebuild and reform armies, police and other security forces includes effective training in gender issues for all personnel and requires ample incorporation of women into those forces. Bringing women into these forces is particularly important to ensure that women who have been abused will come forward with their accusations, as is establishing “family safety units” within police systems. Foreign troop-contributors should also lead by example: the presence all-female peacekeeping units – such as the Indian battalion in Liberia – is a welcome novelty, but it is far from enough. The EU and U.S. should commit to providing teams of women military observers to peacekeeping mission and ceasefire monitoring teams. NATO, the African Union, African sub-regional organizations and other sources of peacekeeping forces should adopt similar programs.

Finally, there must be new financial resources dedicated to these efforts, provided both through assessed and voluntary contributions. There must be a quantum leap in the resources dedicated to these issues, especially for projects in conflict impacted countries – \$1 billion per year, or just about 30 cents per woman. An important initiative to mark the tenth anniversary of Resolution 1325 would be a global presidential- or ministerial-level pledging conference, where member states would be under international suasion to come forward with formal commitments on concrete actions they will take over the next three years to promote the resolution's provisions. Partnerships should be encouraged, perhaps linking new resources from donor countries and new political will from conflicted-affected countries, on the model of the commitments made under the Clinton Global Initiative.^[xvi]

How to Make it Happen: Lessons from Resolution 1820

What lessons can advocates of this agenda learn and adapt from the success in promoting

action in international bodies over the past two years? Key lessons come from the efforts of like-minded advocates in civil society, the UN Secretariat and key member states during the first half of 2008 to pass a Security Council resolution on sexual violence in conflict.

Growing recognition of the rising phenomenon of rape used as a weapon of war set the stage for action in early 2008, but it was advocates recognized that it was important to document and personalize the phenomenon. The importance of data from the ground on the patterns and prevalence of sexual violence in conflict cannot be overstressed. The most important use of such data is in developing projects and policies to prevent such violence and assist its victims^[xvii], but hard numbers also help create political will so that policy-makers are prepared to dedicate scarce resources – including their own attention – to the problem. There are three critical elements: first, credible data to show that the problem is real and pressing; second, a convincing linkage between addressing the problem and achieving broader policy objectives; and third, a credible case to show that a reasonable application of resources and attention can, if not solve, at least make a tangible improvement in the problem. Put simply: is real, important, and solvable? Elsewhere, I have referred to the need to meet a “threshold of credibility.”^[xviii]

The “poster child” of this effort was the tragic situation in eastern Congo. Personal accounts of sexual assaults was vital. Visits to foreign capitals by victims of rapes and those who treat them – including the courageous Dr. Denis Mukwege, who directs the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, which treats rape victims from the region – had a major impact.^[xix] But it was important to go beyond testimonials and be able to say with full confidence that there were 27,000 reported cases of rape in the South Kivu province of eastern Congo, or some 70 every day.

The fifteen ambassadors to the Security Council, all men, were lobbied by advocates, including their spouses. For example, they were made to watch films on sexual violence, such as the graphic *The Greatest Silence* by director Lisa Jackson.^[xx] Efforts by UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, including the hosting of a conference on peacekeepers’ role in preventing sexual violence at Wilton Park outside London, helped personally invest key policy-makers such as U.S. Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad in this effort. Support from like-minded UN missions and Secretariat officials was essential. Pressure also came from U.S. Congressman Bill Delahunt, who headed the House of Representatives oversight for the United Nations and held hearings on the effect of conflict on women in advance of the Security Council debate.^[xxi]

The result was UNSC Resolution 1820, passed on June 19, 2008 under the U.S. presidency of the Council. The resolution breaks new ground by mandating wide-ranging and concrete actions by the UN Secretariat, member states and non-state actors to combat sexual violence in conflict. Its passage is clear evidence of the wisdom of Margaret Mead’s statement: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”^[xxii]

But even in this success story, there is a cautionary note. Members of the Security Council were by no means satisfied that they had a clear picture of the phenomenon. Resolution 1820 called for an “analysis of prevalence and trends, benchmarks for measuring progress,

and plans for a lasting solution to the dearth of reliable sexual violence data." It was as if the Council was saying to the advocates: "We know this is a serious problem, but we do not know enough about what is going on or how to address it." This gap has delayed its implementation and even required the adoption of additional measures – UNSC Resolutions 1888 and 1889 – more than a year later to give real teeth to the efforts.

The Road Ahead

We must move beyond words, resolutions and stock-taking exercises to establish and implement an ambitious but achievable agenda for action on women and armed conflict. The success of our efforts will not be measured by the reports we issue, the resolutions and legislation we pass, the publicity we generate or even the money we spend. It will be measured by the degree to which we protect the lives and well-being of women and girls faced with the horrors of war; empower them to play their rightful and vital role in peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction and governance; prevent armed thugs from abusing them in conditions of displacement; hold government security forces and warlords alike accountable for sexual abuses; prevent traffickers from turning women and girls into commodities; build strong civil society networks for women; and end the stigma of victimization that confronts women leaders.

This dream embodied in UNSC Resolution 1325 must be deferred no longer. Langston Hughes reminds us of the incumbent risks: "What happens to a dream deferred? Does it dry up like a raisin in the sun? Or fester like a sore – and then run? Does it stink like rotten meat? Or crust and sugar over like a syrupy sweet? Maybe it just sags like a heavy load. Or does it explode?"^[xxiii]

[i] The thirteen entities are the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Peacebuilding Support Office, the Joint Program on HIV/AIDS, UN Development Program, UN Population Fund, High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Children's Fund, UN Development Fund for Women, World Food Program, and World Health Organization.

[ii] UN Security Council Resolution 1820, 19 June 2008 *Women, Peace and Security* available at <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/391/44/PDF/N0839144.pdf?OpenElement>; UN Security Council Resolution 1888, 30 September 2009, *Women, Peace and Security*, available at <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/534/46/PDF/N0953446.pdf?OpenElement>; UN Security Council Resolution 1889, 5 October 2009, *Women, Peace and Security*, available at <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N09/542/55/PDF/N0954255.pdf?OpenElement>

[iii] Council of the European Union, 1 December 2008, *Comprehensive Approach to the EU Implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security*, available at http://www.consilium.europa.eu/ueDocs/cms_Data/docs/hr/news187.pdf

[iv] UN Security Council Resolution 1325, 31 October 2000, *Women, Peace and Security*, available at <http://daccess-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N00/720/18/PDF/N0072018.pdf?OpenElement>

[v] Members of the panel are Mary Robinson (Ireland) co-chair, Bineta Diop (Senegal) co-chair, Sanam Anderlini (Iran/UK), Thelma Awori (Liberia/Uganda), Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls (Fiji), Lahkdar Brahimi (Algeria), Nyaradzai Gumbonzvanda (Zimbabwe), Swanee Hunt (U.S.), Hina Jilani (Pakistan), Elisabeth Rehn (Finland), Zainab Salbi (Iraq/U.S.), Salim Ahmed Salim (Tanzania), Donald Steinberg (U.S.), Susana Villaran de la Puente (Peru)

[vi] The Lusaka Protocol, signed 15 November 1994, is available at Digital Collection of Peace Agreements, United States Institute of Peace http://www.usip.org/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/lusaka_11151994.pdf

[vii] See International Crisis Group Asia Report N °158, *Taliban Propaganda Winning the War of Words?* 24 July 2008

[viii] UN Development Fund for Women, April 2009, *Women's Participation in Peace Negotiations: Connections Between Presence and Influence* available at http://www.realizingrights.org/pdf/UNIFEM_handout_Women_in_peace_processes_Brief_April_20_2009.pdf. The research is on-going and data is updated as additional information is received.

[ix] See International Crisis Group Africa Report, N °112, *Beyond Victimhood Women's Peacebuilding in Sudan, Congo and Uganda*, 28 June 2006

[x] Mona Lena Krook, *Quotas for Women in Politics: Gender and Candidate Selection Reform Worldwide*, Oxford University Press, May 2009

[xi] UN Development Fund for Women, *Funding for Women's Needs within Post-Conflict Needs Assessments (PCNAs)*, July 2009. Again, the research is on-going and data is updated as additional information is received.

[xii] More information about Pact is available at http://www.pactworld.org/cs/who_we_are/welcome.

[xiii] UN High Commissioner for Refugees May 2003, *Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Against Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Guidelines for Prevention and Response*, available at <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=3edcd0661&page=search>

Inter-Agency Standing Committee *Guidelines for Gender-Based Violence Interventions in Humanitarian Settings: Focusing on Prevention and Response to Sexual Violence In Emergencies*, September 2005 at <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/439474c74.html>; Inter-Agency Standing Committee *Protection Cluster Working Group, 2007, Gender-Based Violence, Part, V.4 Inter-Agency Handbook for the Protection of Internally Displaced Persons*, available at <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=4790cbc02&>

page=search

[xiv] One recent example of this failure is in the humanitarian response to the earthquake in Haiti. Despite clear IASC guidance regarding the design of sanitation efforts in humanitarian settings, as of April 2010, latrines were not divided between men and women in most IDP facilities, they did not as have inside locks, and there was insufficient lighting. A predictable and preventable pattern of rape and other sexual abuse resulted in these areas.

[xv] See Women's Refugee Commission, *Beyond Firewood: Fuel Alternatives and Protection Strategies for Displaced Women and Girls*, March 2006, available at <http://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/docs/fuel.pdf>; Inter-Agency Standing Committee Task Force on Safe Access to Firewood & Alternative Energy in Humanitarian Settings, April 2009, *Matrix on Agency Roles and Responsibilities for Ensuring a Coordinated, Multi-sectoral Fuel Strategy in Humanitarian Settings Version 1.1* available at, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/4ac5f1b22.pdf>

[xvi] The Clinton Global Initiative brings together international civil society actors, the business community, governments, foundations and international organizations to make joint commitments to achieve time-bound goals in key social and economic sectors. Since its formation in 2005, the initiative has fostered 1,700 commitments generating some \$57 billion in new resources.

[xvii] Key insights can be derived from identifying the profile of perpetrators, for example. If most rapes are carried out by government security forces, then there is a clear need for expanded programs of security sector reform, prosecution of individual soldiers/police and their commanders, expansion of the numbers of women in security forces and new training in protection of civilians. A different kind of intervention is required if most rapes are perpetrated rebel forces, family members or unknown assailants. Similarly, if the data show broad unreported numbers of rapes, there should be steps to facilitate women's access to the justice system, to bring women into the police forces and expand community policing, to look at social mores that condone such behavior and to conduct civic education programs to make individuals aware of their rights.

[xviii] Speech by Donald Steinberg, Deputy President, International Crisis Group, given 17 December 2008 (Geneva) to UN Action Against Sexual Violence in Conflict, *Combatting Sexual Violence in Conflict: Using Facts From the Ground*,

[xix] Further information on the work of Denis Mukwege and the Panzi Hospital in Bukavu available at <http://www.panzihospitalbukavu.org/>

[xx] Lisa Jackson, *The Greatest Silence*, 2007. For more information, upcoming screenings and events, and DVD purchase, see <http://thegreatestsilence.org/>

[xxi] Bill Delahunt, Chairman, U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on the International Organizations, Human Rights and Oversight, *UN Security Council 1325: Recognizing Women's Vital Role in Achieving Peace and Security*, Thursday 15 May 2008, at http://foreignaffairs.house.gov/hearing_notice.asp?id=988

[xxii] The efforts of two talented and dedicated officers – Laurie Phipps and Phil Staltonstall at

the U.S. and UK missions to the UN respectively – cannot be overstated.

[xxiii] Rampersad, A. & Roessel, D (Eds.). 1995, *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*.
Vintage Classics: London