



SPAIN2015-2016

NON-PERMANENT MEMBER
OF THE UNITED NATIONS
SECURITY COUNCIL

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY:

**SPANISH PRIORITY FOR
THE SECURITY COUNCIL**

1. INTRODUCTION

2015 marks the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (WPS) by the Security Council. In this framework, the Security Council will convene, in October, a High-Level Review to assess progress, renew commitments and address obstacles and constraints that have emerged in the implementation of Resolution 1325.

Spain, convinced of the important role played by women in conflict prevention and resolution and in peacebuilding, has made his High-Level Review one of the priorities of its upcoming Presidency of the Security Council.

2. WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY: WHERE DO WE STAND?

United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, adopted unanimously on 31 October 2000, under the Presidency of Namibia, constitutes a milestone in incorporating the gender perspective into the prevention, management and resolution of armed conflicts.

This Resolution was the culmination of a process that had taken place over previous decades, where civil society, through women's organizations, played a crucial role, especially during the World Conferences on Women in Nairobi (1985) and in Beijing (1995), under the auspices of the United Nations.

Resolution 1325 and those that came after it have, thus, become the regulatory framework of reference in this regard, strengthening the consideration paid to women's and girls' specific protection needs in conflict and post-conflict situations, and the decisive active role that women can and must play in building and consolidating long-lasting peace. There is data supporting the existence of a direct link between women's participation in peace processes and the achievement of long-lasting peace.

The approval of six more Resolutions in this regard has contributed to the achievement of considerable success:

► **Resolution 1820 (2008)** describes sexual violence as a tactic of war and underlines the need to consider such acts as crimes against humanity in certain cases, and even acts of genocide under certain circumstances. This Resolution expressed the UNSC's intention to punish the perpetrators of acts of sexual violence in conflict, and the need to put an end to impunity.

► **Resolution 1888 (2009)** decided that the mandates of UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) should include specific provisions to protect women and children from rape and other forms of sexual violence, and asked the UN Secretary-General (UNSG) to appoint a Special Representative on sexual violence in armed conflicts.



► **Resolution 1889 (2009)**, focused on promoting the role of women in peace processes, asked the UNSG to provide the UNSC with a series of indicators to verify the effective implementation of Resolution 1325.

► **Resolution 1960 (2010)** contains further steps in the fight against sexual violence. Among other measures, it asks the UNSG to make a list—as an Appendix to his annual report in this area—of the parties in a conflict that are suspected of perpetrating rape or other forms of sexual violence.

► **Resolution 2106 (2013)** insisted on the need for a greater effort by Member States and by the entire UN to achieve full respect for Resolutions in this area and, in particular, to combat impunity for sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. This Resolution states that the basis for preventing sexual violence in these conflict and post-conflict situations is the recognition of gender equality and women's political, social and economic empowerment.

► **Resolution 2122 (2013)** insisted on accountability and underlined the need for women's engagement in all the stages of conflict: prevention, resolution and peacebuilding. This Resolution noted that the UNSC needs to receive better information on the challenges in this regard through, among other channels, the inclusion of strategic information in all reports addressed to it.

With Resolution 1325 (2000), the UNSC undertook to include the issue of WPS as a differentiated thematic item on its agenda. With the help of the subsequent Resolutions, this issue has been gradually mainstreamed, and is present in many UNSC Resolutions, such as those approving or renewing PKO mandates.

Even though the UNSC has played an important role in creating this ambitious body of



regulations, it has, however, also been inconsistent in addressing and implementing this agenda. From a broader perspective, the degree of commitment of the different States—whether or not they are members of the UNSC—varies. We all need to take on greater responsibilities in protecting women in these situations (in particular, in view of the distressing generalization of sexual violence as a weapon of war and of terrorism across the planet) and regarding their role as a necessary agent for long-lasting peace.

3. FROM RESOLUTIONS TO SOLUTIONS: A PRIORITY FOR SPAIN IN ITS SECURITY COUNCIL PRESIDENCY

As stated in the paper listing our priorities for the 2015-2016 term at the UNSC, ‘from our seat on the UNSC, Spain will promote the effective application of resolutions on WPS (...) and will support the active involvement of women in peacebuilding processes, as well as fight impunity for sexual violence in armed conflict (...)’.

Coinciding with the October anniversary of the adoption of Resolution 1325 (2000), Spain is working with other Security Council members to give this agenda a fresh boost.

Our aim is not only to discuss what has and has not worked since Resolution 1325 was passed. We are also attempting to bridge the enormous gap between what is set forth in the Regulations passed by the UNSC and what happens at headquarters and on the ground. At the same time, Spain wishes to complete the regulatory framework, addressing challenges and threats that also require the UNSC’s attention but have not been contemplated until now.



These issues include:

- Strengthening the protection of women and girls in conflict situations, enhancing protection against sexual violence and other gender-motivated crimes against women that, while also an issue in times of peace, increase exponentially during conflicts: trafficking, forced marriage, forced prostitution, etc.
- Paying particular attention to the protection of certain groups of women, such as refugee or internally displaced women, human rights activists, indigenous women, etc.
- Albeit not dispensing with the protection pillar, highlighting other pillars such as prevention, stressing the importance of pinpointing the gender variables that appear in conflict risk factors and causes.
- Firmly believing in the role that women can play in preventive diplomacy and mediation, as well as women's participation in peacebuilding processes.
- Strengthening the UN's institutional architecture with regard to WPS issues by setting up an informal group of experts to promote the on-the-ground implementation of regulations; as well as prioritizing WPS concerns in all geographical issues on the UNSC's agenda.
- Seeking methods to ensure effective oversight of the implementation of the agenda by the Security Council, such as improving flows of information on what is happening on the ground.
- Strengthening the language on WPS in all documents issued by the Security Council and its subsidiary bodies.

- Increasing collaboration with civil society organizations and, in particular, with organizations working on the ground, with the aim of strengthening the promotion and protection of women's and girls' human rights in conflict and post-conflict zones.

- Mobilizing the resources required in this area.

4. HOW DO WE GET THERE? THE ROAD TO ACHIEVING THESE AIMS

To meet these aims, Spain is, together with other UNSC members, promoting an inclusive process, which is open to UNSC Member States and non-members alike, as well as to regional organizations and civil society, and takes their viewpoints and ideas on board, with the aim of ensuring a successful outcome from the October review.

To this end, meetings have been organized with a diverse geographical composition, bringing together representatives of countries that share our conviction of the importance of the WPS agenda in conflict prevention and resolution. The ultimate goal is to get the United Nations Member States to take on new, ambitious and tangible commitments in this area.

Moreover, as part of the preparations for the October review, on 22 May, Spain organized an Arria-formula debate between the UNSC members and representatives from the expert panels in charge of writing reports for this year's three planned reviews (of Resolution 1325, peacekeeping operations, and peacebuilding architecture). This debate gave us an opportunity to find out these experts' preliminary conclusions and recommendations on these ongoing reviews, as well as to highlight the importance of complementarity and synergy between the different reviews to ensure the effective implementation of all facets of the WPS agenda. This meeting also gave us the opportunity to address the matter of how the UNSC can improve its action in this field.

At the same time, Spain is working with key contacts at the Secretariat and UN Women, with the aim of getting these bodies to assume their own responsibilities at headquarters and—above all—on the ground through peacekeeping operations and the work of country teams. To this end, Spain's Permanent Representative to the United Nations has held meetings with the Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and with the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, as well as with the person ultimately responsible for upholding the UN's commitment to this agenda, the UN Secretary-General himself.

We are also working with the UN's Department of Public Information and with UN Women to raise awareness in this area. Our aim is to foster the empowerment and participation of women in peacebuilding processes and to raise awareness of the special protection needs of women and girls in conflict situations.



5. CONCLUSION

Over the last decade, Spain has made an unflagging effort to firmly and consistently promote the inclusion of the gender perspective in conflict prevention and resolution processes, through the use of the right tools.

One example of this resolve is our passing of a National Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325 in November 2007, as well as subsequent follow-up reports, as set forth in the Plan itself.

Making the WPS agenda one of Spain's priorities for its Presidency of the Security Council is another example of this effort, which we intend to complete by taking on major new commitments that help to achieve results on the ground.



