



Kabul Declaration

Women in Afghanistan: Regional Stakeholders Meeting 6-7 July 2009

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Gender Relevance of the Hague Declaration

The meeting was organised by the Afghan Women's Network and Gender Concerns International, with the participation of women leaders from Afghanistan, Iran, India, Pakistan and Uzbekistan. The participants discussed the relevance of UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 in promoting peace, stability and development in Afghanistan and the region through the increased involvement and participation of women. The group also discussed the Hague Declaration and its impact on Afghanistan.

The regional context includes the women of Afghanistan, Iran, India, Pakistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. The group agreed that, considering the growing challenges for peace, security and development in Afghanistan and the region, there is a strong need for the regional approach which would also facilitate interactions among women in the region.

After intensive discussions the five country delegates present at the meeting, concluded with the following recommendations to support the peace, security and development processes in Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries.

FOR AFGHANISTAN:

Women's Participation in the Peace Process

The participants agreed that peace is defined beyond the military structures of police and army and in a more comprehensive analysis, should be described as rule of law in conformity with national constitution and international human rights.

Building on this definition of peace and security, the Government and the international community should ensure that security is provided in a more comprehensive form considering the special needs and interests of women and children.

- The Government and international community should ensure the implementation of international Humanitarian Law during the conflict.

- In order to increase the number of women in law enforcement agencies, the Government and international community needs to pay special attention to capacity development, affirmative action and special needs and protection measures for women.
- Any peace negotiations should ensure women's participation and protect the constitutional human rights of women.
- Serious disarmament should be initiated by the Government and supported by the international community to mitigate the threats that prevent women's societal participation.

Women's Political Participation and International Development Assistance

The meeting agreed that in confirmation with the Afghan National Development Strategy (ANDS), 30% of government and political leadership positions should be reserved for women who are effective and committed to the women's cause, at all levels including at high-level leadership. The Afghan women's movement is committed to assist the Government in identifying these women.

- The Government should take concrete measures to ensure the proper implementation of the ANDS in order to improve women's participation in accordance with the above-mentioned commitment.
- The international community should mainstream gender concerns in all the programmes it supports and should also promote for more women's participation in senior positions in the Government.
- A percentage of development funds should be agreed on for women-specific programmes and initiatives.
- Civil society organisations should strengthen their capacities to coordinate and network more effectively for gender empowerment.
- The capacity of the Parliament should be strengthened to understand and support gender matters in order to effectively monitor and hold accountable the executive agencies of the Government.

Security Reforms

The participants agreed that security has many complex dimensions such as physical, psychological, societal and military. Poverty aggravates insecurity in the population, including among women and children.

- The Government should speed up the establishment of a national action plan for the implementation of UNSCR 1325.

- The Government should, on urgent basis, initiate a national policy and mechanism to eliminate the sexual harassment in all governmental and non-governmental working, educational and public places.
- The Government and international community should recognise the role of communities and civil society groups to determine and take ownership of any local development plans for creating security in their lives.

Cross-Cutting Recommendation

- The regional meeting proposes to the United Nations to assign a UN special rapporteur for the monitoring the implementation of United Nations Security Resolution 1325.

Conclusions

The participants from the five countries committed themselves to follow-up on the implementation of the above recommendations, to develop a long-term strategy and to pursue the establishment of a regional monitoring body to oversee the progress of UNSCR 1325 in Afghanistan and the region. The full support of governments in the region and of their respective international development communities would also be vital to move this process forward in these countries' effort to achieve peace, security and development for all. Population groups.

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Drafting committee:

Anastasia Pinto	India/CORE
Minoli De Bresser	the Netherlands/Gender Concerns International
Sabra Bano	the Netherlands/Gender Concerns International
Shahla Akhtiari	Iran/Farhikteh NGO
Mossarat Qadeem	Pakistan/Paiman
Nazokat Kasymova	Uzbekistan/ADB, EPOS
Seema Ghani	Afghanistan/AWN
Wazhma Frogh	Afghanistan/AWN

Approved by:

All the participants of the 7th July special session on the Agreed Conclusions