

April 9-10, 2012

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Implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security in Iraq

Event: Regional Conference

Date, Place: April 9-10, 2012, Rotana Hotel, Erbil – Iraq

Concept: Suzan Aref, Dr. Martin Beck

Organization: Women Empowerment Organization, Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Amman

1. Program Overview

Monday, April 9, 2012

Welcome Speeches

Suzan Aref	Director Women Empowerment Organization Erbil – Iraq
Dr. Martin Beck	Resident Representative Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Amman Amman – Jordan

Presenting UNSCR 1325 on Women and Security

Huma Shakeeb Khan	Director Office of Human Rights – United Nations Assistance Mission Iraq Erbil –Iraq
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Introducing EUJUST LEX-Iraq's Initiative on UNSCR 1325 and Women's Rights

Margareta Krook	Human Rights and Gender Expert EUJUST LEX-Iraq Erbil – Iraq
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The Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women and Security since 2003 in Iraq

Kamil Hashim	General Director Ministry of Human Rights Baghdad – Iraq
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AUSLANDSBÜRO JORDANIEN **Presenting Resolution 1325's Iraqi Network – Advocacy, Obstacles, and Opportunities**

April 9-10, 2012

Dr. Sundus Abbas

Director
Women's Leadership Institute
Baghdad – Iraq

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Challenges to Integrate UN Resolution 1325 and Women's Rights in Iraqi Legislation

Amera Abdullah

Legal Expert
Friends of Peace
Sulaimaniya – Iraq

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Tuesday, April 10, 2012

The Role of Civil Society in Applying the National Action Plan on UNSCR 1325 –Lessons Learned from the Dutch Case Study

Nikki de Zwaan

Gender Advisor
IKV Pax Christi
Netherlands

The Role of UNSCR 1325 in Peace-building and Empowering Women Decision Makers

Ingela Maartenson

President
Operation 1325
Sweden

Group Work and Presentations – Developing a National Action Plan

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2. Objective

During the 1990's the United Nations was involved in 38 separate peacekeeping operations. After a decade of extensive conflict, and subsequent peace negotiations, the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1325 on October 31, 2000. The resolution aims to activate the role of women in conflict resolution and security operations, particularly during post-conflict situations. It calls on the UN and its member states to gender-mainstream security in order to address the needs of women and girls in conflict.

Beginning in 2003, the Iraqi women's movement made extensive efforts to empower the role of women in political and social life. The Transitional Administrative Law of 2004 specified that women must occupy a minimum of 25 percent of all seats in parliament and other elected bodies. During the January 2005 election – the first after the overthrow of the Ba'th regime – women won 31 percent of parliamentary seats and 28 percent of the seats in local councils. This was the result of an active role by women's rights organizations: raising awareness about the elections, training female candidates in campaigning, and motivating women to vote. In this context, Resolution 1325 is one of the instruments used by women in Iraq to push for equality in decision-making positions and national reconciliation.

A major problem, however, is that the lack of awareness on the resolution has had a negative impact on peace building initiatives in Iraq, particularly with regard to women's involvement. In many areas of Iraq, the majority of women holding key parliament and government positions are marginalized despite being represented through the quota system.

On April 9-10, 2012, Women Empowerment Organization and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung Amman organized a two-day regional conference at the Rotana Hotel in Erbil, Iraq. Participants included gender experts from international NGOs, government ministry staff, women's rights activists, and academics to discuss Resolution 1325 in the context of Iraq's restructuring efforts.

Drawing from local and international experiences, the conference aimed to create a network of organizations and develop a national action plan to implement the resolution.

3. Details

Welcome Speeches

Dr. Martin Beck inducted the conference, recognizing the international community's increased focus, in recent years, on the suffering women endure during conflict. But the majority of women in the nations most affected by these egregious acts are unaware of their basic human rights. Few people are more closely affected by this problem than the women of Iraq.

It has been nearly 12 years since United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed - specifically to protect women from violence by involving them in peace and security operations. In subsequent years several complementary resolutions were also passed to build on its stipulations. But without active pursuit of the provisions held within, violence against women will persist; and women will continue to be marginalized when it comes to conflict resolution. The burden to raise awareness and implement UNSCR 1325 falls heavily on the women, and men, working in CSOs and the Iraqi government. Konrad Adenauer Stiftung's role to contribute toward this objective was to facilitate a meeting between those who are considered some of the most reputable activists, scholars, and politicians.

Suzan Aref focused on the current state of Resolution 1325 in Iraq. Despite its existence since 2000, the resolution has not been activated enough. The government ministries and agencies responsible for women's rights require more understanding of its contents. Although Iraq has a quota system, women are consistently left out of decision making processes when it comes to peace and security. Women Empowerment Organization conceptualized the conference's objectives to define the resolution, exchange experiences, discuss

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collaborative activities, and develop a national action plan.

Presenting UNSCR 1325 on Women and Security

Huma Shakeeb Khan made the distinction that UNSCR 1325 is more accurately correlated to the operations of the UN itself, rather than the member states'. It does, however, encourage member states to adopt mechanisms which link women to issues of peace and security – not as victims but as key actors in conflict resolution, calling for an increase of peacekeeping operations.

With respect to the situation in Iraq, conflict resolution is conducted through political blocs whose representation by women is dismal. In Kurdistan there is very little representation by women and in other parts of Iraq, even less. Ms. Khan was critical of civil society organizations and the UN for treading water with the institutionalized cause of preventing violence against women – calling it a “comfort zone in which we all want to live forever.” The weakness of Resolution 1325 lies in its lack of answerability mechanisms because it is not binding to member states. Rather, the language is suggestive instead of commanding; frequently using the passive, “when possible.”

After 2006, the armed militias responsible for infighting in Baghdad were integrated into the military and police force. There was no process to hold them accountable for what had previously been done. And the stronger the militia, the more power they received during conflict resolution. Despite a quota system in Iraq and Kurdistan for government positions, women are still severely marginalized at the table because they were never previously in positions of power. In order to reverse these negative results, reallocation of resources and gender sensitive budgeting is crucial to making necessary progress for Iraqis' security.

Introducing EU JUSTLEX-Iraq's Initiative on UNSCR 1325

Margareta Krook presented EU JUSTLEX's activities in Iraq. Utilizing Resolution 1325, it encourages female participation using five principles of conflict resolution:

1. Increase participation and respect of women at all levels of decision making and institution building of security.
2. Give attention to specific protection needs of women and girls in conflict.
3. Provide gender perspective in post-conflict processes.
4. Provide gender perspective in UN programming, reporting, and Security Council missions.
5. Provide gender perspective when training UN peace supporting forces.

EU JUSTLEX seeks to support the Iraqi criminal justice system by providing access to justice and legal aid for the people. Many Iraqis feel alienated from the system because they lack access to it, and have little knowledge of their basic rights. In order to achieve confidence in the system, legal aid and CSO oversight must be implemented. Part of EU JUSTLEX's program is to promote the right to a fair trial in civil and criminal cases, impartial courts, and measures to prevent abuse by police and judges. EU JUSTLEX also conducts training workshops on anti-corruption and anti-trafficking; and police courses on crime scene investigation, gender crimes, and female genital mutilation.

The Implementation of UNSCR 1325 on Women and Security since 2003 in Iraq

Kamil Hashim discussed the actions that the Ministry of Human Rights has taken to protect Iraqi women in adherence with CEDAW and other international agreements. Women remain highly marginalized in Iraq despite efforts by the government to empower them both politically and economically. The recently formed Kurdish government contains only one woman in a senior position – the Minister of Work and Social Affairs. A quota system employed by the government is ineffective as seen in the

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extremely low-levels of participation by women, particularly when it comes to security issues.

UNSCR 1325 is an endorsement to train peacekeeping teams which incorporate women in security issues – an objective the Iraqi ministries are presently working toward. Resolution 1325 calls for applying all international peace decisions whenever it is related to gender issues, including training and reintegration for prisoners and refugees, and all reconstruction efforts which follow conflict. The government succeeded in restoring refugees to their homes with the assistance of foreign aid, providing them with reimbursement and situation diagnosis. But there is still a lack of coordination between funding nations and the Iraqi government. There is a need for gender concept integration in UN reports and all UN missions – which lack gender specialists. It also requires procedures which should be taken by UN observers.

Mr. Hashim presented the Ministry of Human Rights' critique of UNSCR 1325:

1. It does not mention of the impact war has on women of different ages, and their respective varying needs.
2. The absence of a mechanism to measure performance – making it difficult to evaluate the impacts of implementing the resolution. Thus there is a need to support qualitative and quantitative research.
3. The resolution does not link the many risks women are exposed to; whereas it should be given more attention due to the relationship between conflict, power, and sexual violence. The threat of sexual violence is considered the main reason behind the lack of participation by women in peace building and social reform.
4. The resolution is not binding and therefore appeals solely to the goodwill of member states.
5. The resolution does not include a mechanism for its implementation, or a timeline for each stage, which

would help in measuring a country's level of adherence to it.

Presenting 1325's Iraqi Network – Advocacy, Obstacles, and Opportunities

Dr. Sundus Abbas discussed a network formed by the Women's Leadership Institute which has worked to activate Resolution 1325 in Iraq since 2011. It consists of 25 organizations, 18 activists, and personnel from Iraqi ministries, although their membership is not officially sanctioned. Their goal is to increase women's participation in peace building operations, and establish safeguards in the event of future destabilization. They succeeded in coordinating with the UN mission to work on a national agenda, and are involved with international and national conferences to raise awareness of women's needs and status in Iraq – in addition to reporting the achievements Iraqi women have made.

But the network faces shortcomings: Limited participation by government and non-governmental organizations hinders their goals and that of the women in Iraq. Ultimately women's participation in the security sector and developing security policy is necessary to utilize Resolution 1325 to its full capacity.

Challenges to Integrate UN Resolution 1325 and Women's Rights in Iraqi Legislation

Amera Abdullah stated the current challenges Iraq faces with the resolution and what efforts have been made to meet them. In the Kurdistan region, old Iraqi laws have been modified and new laws have been drafted in accordance with Resolution 1325. The Kurdistan Parliament modified the Personal Status Law to secure more rights for women; and a new Anti-Domestic Violence Law was passed most recently. But there are many challenges ahead, despite the positive measures already taken.

In the Kurdistan region, it is mandated that 25% of elected bodies are comprised of women; but they are more likely to work toward the agenda of the political party they represent rather than women's rights. Another challenge is the anachronistic

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judicial system – where judges and courts fail to implement new or modified laws with consistency. Political parties in Iraq do not use the resolution when negotiating agreements, and thus, women’s rights remain a lower priority.

Prior to 2003, Iraq was all but isolated from the international community. During that time, internal political problems became rampant. Iraq requires additional aid from the international community and more time in order to build a stable political system, capable of effectively implementing UN resolutions.

In Sulaimaniya, by cooperating with the Women’s Leadership Institute, Friends of Peace has held workshops and published booklets on Resolution 1325 without the support of international actors. Local initiatives are taking place but with international support more can be done.

Day Two

The Role of Civil Society in Applying the National Action Plan – Lessons from the Dutch Case Study

Nikki de Zwaan discussed IKV Pax-Christi’s and the Netherlands’ experience. One critical point of Resolution 1325 is its call for a national action plan – which 35 countries currently have. In the case of the Netherlands, over 30 CSOs and research institutes are incorporated in its development. The Dutch learned from their first action plan, from 2008-2011, that too many indicators and a lack of specificity were detrimental to its success. Instead, a plan with one theme, a few focuses, and clear outcomes and indicators is substantially more manageable. In addition, there must be a clear monitoring and evaluation process for the budget; those involved with the action plan must hold each other accountable. Women must be included not only in planning but also the solution of security issues.

A national action plan must be comprehensive. This requires cooperation between government and civil society – which is sometimes difficult to balance. Within civil society there is competition over

funding and ideology, which greatly affects the planning process. In addition, it is the government and military’s primary responsibility to develop peace and security policies. Civil society, however, should always be involved at every step of the process.

Ms. de Zwaan responded to the participants’ questions and stated that workshops on 1325 should not be given to local villages. They need to assess their own security needs, as an action plan is not a law but a policy plan. With regard to local traditions, translating international language into local narrative is important in order for it to be relatable. The resolution was designed to address the problems of women born into societies in which they are marginalized – focusing on power relations. Resolution 1325 is specifically attentive to security issues. Once there is security, development is possible. Women need to be safe in doing their work or all other aspects of development are unachievable.

The Role of UNSCR 1325 in Peace-Building, and Empowering Women Decision Makers

Ingela Maartenson discussed Operation 1325’s work with the UN resolution, and its activities in Iraq since 2011 to achieve security sector reform. A study from 2006-2008 showed that the EU’s level of incorporating women in security or military positions ranges from 5-20 percent. Ms. Maartenson stressed that the EU must also work harder to implement Resolution 1325. In 2005, NATO began to implement 1325 through the Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC) program. Ms. Maartenson contended, however, that Operation 1325 does not want to militarize Resolution 1325 or be subordinate to the military. Operation 1325 offers the following recommendations to include women in security:

1. Involve women in international dialogue.
2. Raise issues of security in environmental factors.

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3. Be visible to spread awareness and seek support via internet resources.
4. Be well informed with reliable sources to back statements.
5. Develop structures and networks amongst women's advocacy groups.
6. Increase education on women's rights in decision making.
7. Produce shadow reports for international actors.

The discussion session which followed addressed several discrepancies between Ms. Maartenson and some participants:

Dr. Martin Beck suggested that if only 5-20 percent of personnel in EU peacekeeping missions are women, documented evidence should be presented which suggests the missions are less effective because of being male-dominated. Adequate evidence could convince decision makers to increase women's role in security. Furthermore, if NATO is successful in its implementation of 1325, why is it problematic? The resolution inherently supports gender mainstreaming security by sanctioning a non-pacifist approach. Dr. Beck asserted that if NATO is achieving this objective then it is a positive outcome. Ms. Maartenson responded, saying the fear of aligning civil society to the military could potentially make them targets of violence. Their goal is to be neutral in conflict situations and provide humanitarian aid when needed.

Nikki de Zwaan contested that the portrayal of CIMIC was incorrect. Civil society is not subordinate to the military – it a program so they do not work against each other. CSOs make military and police aware of what security means to the local population. Ms. Maartenson concluded the discussion, asserting her desire to keep the military and civil society separate from one another. It is easier to portray women as victims than resources because it's an issue of power. Someone has to give up power in order to give it to women; suggesting this is the cause Resolution 1325 has been implemented minimally over the past 12 years.

Group Work – Recommendations to Develop a National Action Plan

During the final session of the two day conference, participants were divided into groups to produce a multi-faceted action plan, and strategies to maintain cohesion, despite being geographically and financially constrained. Martin Beck recommended they compromise internally and achieve consensus with their plan before presenting it to the government, or it will not pass the scrutiny of infighting and fractured support. The participants' plan has been broken down into four categories which incorporate the relevant ideas to each:

Information: Conduct a massive awareness campaign through workshops, media, pamphlets, and reports; with a target audience of the Iraqi Council of Representatives, members of the Federal, Kurdish, and local governments, and other civil society organizations. Then engage with religious leaders to help promote the tenets of the resolution and add to the cultural legitimacy of gender-mainstreaming security. Finally, introduce the contents of the resolution in all curricula of humanity departments of Iraqi universities.

Legislation: Define the resolution in the context of amending existing laws related to Resolution 1325; and legislate new laws to directly recruit more women into decision making roles including, but not limited to, a quota system at various levels of government and security. Concentrate legislation on international agreements ratified by the government which emphasize women's rights.

National Organizations: Develop a network of Iraqi NGOs and CSOs which includes academics and journalists – acting as a monitoring and oversight body. They must have a common agenda and hold meetings prior to seeking international support.

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International Support: Seek partners from international agencies which can assist with funding and technical training.

4. Conclusion

Stability in post-war Iraq remains tenuous. While some regions of the country have fared better than others, greater involvement of women in security issues is necessary to achieve sustained stability. Although there have been noticeably progressive steps towards integration, women will be marginalized as long as they remain fractured in their efforts. Gender-mainstreaming security – as Resolution 1325 stipulates – requires a non-pacifist approach, and its implementation compels an overhaul of entrenched structures which have precluded women’s role in security. Women must hold positions of political and military power in order to provide gender perspective in security issues. This can only be done through large scale social and political reform; and success of this goal is dependent on unity of NGOs and promoting political will from the government.

Konrad Adenauer Stiftung’s role to facilitate the conference is part of a long term goal to help form a network of NGOs, ministries, security agencies, and international actors. Women Empowerment Organization is credited for the concept of the conference – serving as a natural leader of the women’s rights movement in Iraq. The lessons from the speakers and participants, and the cooperation between different political and social groups in the country, are indicative of a growing trend toward solving Iraq’s problems. The cohesive atmosphere during the group’s discussion demonstrated their strong desire to maintain a network and collaborate in the future.