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STATEMENT BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

TO THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE

ON

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

NEW YORK, 27 OCTOBER 2005

DÉCLARATION DE

**L'AMBASSADEUR GILBERT LAURIN
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AUPRÈS DES NATIONS UNIES**

LORS DU DÉBAT PUBLIC DU CONSEIL DE SÉCURITÉ DES NATIONS UNIES

SUR

LES FEMMES, LA PAIX ET LA SÉCURITÉ

NEW YORK, LE 27 OCTOBRE 2005

Mr. President,

I am pleased to address you today on behalf of the Human Security Network, a cross-regional group of 14 countries, which includes Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland, Thailand, and South Africa as an observer. On behalf of the countries of the Human Security Network, I would like to express our appreciation to Romania for convening this open debate on women, peace and security – a priority issue for the Network – and welcome the compelling presentations made by today's panellists.

At the 2005 World Summit, world leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the full and effective implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325. As we mark the 5th anniversary of this resolution, and look to other important commitments such as the protection of civilians and children in armed conflict, and important milestones such as the 10-year review of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, it is clear that we have the commitments necessary for strong and concerted action in all situations of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction.

The creation of a Peacebuilding Commission is essential to preserving and building international peace and security. In his report this year to the Security Council on women, peace and security, the Secretary General urged member states to take concerted action to integrate a gender perspective into the design and work of the Peacebuilding Commission. This is a golden opportunity, from the outset, to ensure that the Commission's work incorporates the knowledge and lessons we have learned in the implementation of Resolution 1325. Effective and sustainable peace, justice and security is a distant reality if we do not consider peace and security and all its related activities through a gender lens. The Human Security Network countries welcome the letter sent to the Secretary General and the President of the General Assembly by the Women Foreign Ministers on this issue. We will work with other member states to ensure that the Peacebuilding Commission fully integrates this approach in its structure, mandate and practice.

In this spirit, I thank the Secretary General for his report which outlines the United Nations System-wide action plan for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325. The Network applauds the efforts of the Secretary General and the UN system in this area and strongly welcomes this action plan which it commits to supporting in full.

Mr. President,

In this context, the Human Security Network strongly supports the Secretary General's recommendation to appoint a focal point or group of focal points at high levels to monitor the progress of implementation of Resolution 1325 within the UN System. In addition, and as mentioned during last year's open debate on women, peace and security, the members of the Network call on the Security Council to strongly consider establishing a mechanism to monitor its own actions in integrating Resolution 1325, and

other related Resolutions, into its daily work possibly through a focal point or expert-level working group of the Security Council.

As Member States of the United Nations, we should all consider developing national action plans and coordinated strategies on the implementation of Resolution 1325, a process which Canada has begun.

Mr. President,

Among the gaps identified by the Secretary General in his report are the lack of systematic incorporation of gender perspectives in peace agreements and the lack of enhanced women's participation in formal peace processes. These elements were the focus of the Expert Group Meeting, hosted by Canada in preparation for last year's session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which developed a framework for model provisions on peace agreements as a means for promoting gender equality and ensuring women's participation in peace processes. The Network welcomes this outcome.

Women are highly active and effective in informal peace processes. The challenge lies in their participation in formal processes where peace agreements are negotiated. There, women have been "frozen out" of the peace process and left no room at the peace table. In addition, a further challenge is that formal peace processes rarely take gender perspectives into account.

The Human Security Network is committed to taking concrete steps to enhance women's role and integrate gender equality in peace processes more effectively, thereby strengthening the legitimacy of decision-making processes and in so doing assisting in laying the groundwork for a meaningful and sustainable peace for all. The Network maintains that involvement of all of society at every step, including women and women's groups, is crucial to the enduring success of the entire peace process, from negotiation to implementation of a peace agreement. In order to achieve this, capacity building on gender equality, women's rights and the gender differentiated experiences of security is required for all actors, both men and women, as is an active search for women leaders.

Members of the Network urge the Security Council to systematically incorporate gender considerations in all aspects of mission planning and execution, particularly from the outset. This would result in directing peace support action towards a security that is as real for women as it is for men. Concretely, this could mean, for example, that women's enhanced role in transitional justice mechanisms would more likely bring to immediate attention impunity for acts of violence and seek robust measures to address it.

The Human Security Network would like to reiterate the importance of achieving gender justice and welcomes the conferences recently held on this issue both in New

York and Stockholm.

As we noted last year at this very open debate, sexual and gender-based violence remains alarmingly pervasive in conflict-affected areas. The referral by the Security Council of the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court, and the Court's investigation into the situation in DRC and Uganda, are very positive steps, yet are a testimony to the widespread allegations of horrific abuses against women and girls in conflict situations. In this year's report, the Secretary General highlights once again that more action is required to prevent, document and report on gender-based violence, as we have not yet done enough. The Network reiterates that it is the role of the Security Council to work together with countries and governments, as well as the International Criminal Court, to prosecute such crimes and eliminate the impunity with which they are perpetrated.

In this regard, the Network welcomes the recent adoption of the principle of the Responsibility to Protect by world leaders in the World Summit Outcome. We were particularly pleased that the threshold for action that was endorsed is an inclusive one, in that it holds not only genocide and war crimes but also crimes against humanity as a key trigger for action. The definition of crimes against humanity includes all of the most egregious examples of gender-based violence - the horrific results of which we have seen in too many conflict areas. We must continue to work to ensure that the international community has both the capacity and the political will to operationalize the Responsibility to Protect. In particular, a rigorous monitoring and reporting mechanism for gender-based violence will be essential to ensure that states shoulder their responsibility to not only prevent such violence but also to protect their own citizens from such crimes.

In conclusion, the Human Security Network believes it is the role of the Security Council to ensure that planning and implementation of all multi-dimensional peace support operations fully integrate a gender analysis and aim to strengthen the many and varied roles of women in peace processes, whether of a political, humanitarian, development, policing or civilian affairs nature. Members of the Network thus strongly urge the Council to give full consideration to the report of the Secretary General containing the UN System-Wide Action Plan on the Implementation of Resolution 1325, and to implementing the recommendations therein.

We look forward to future discussions in this forum where we can hear reports of how Resolution 1325 has been implemented in specific conflict situations and has made a difference in the lives of women.

Thank you, Mr. President.