

## UN SC Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security: Issues and Instruments – The Afghan Context



June 2005

Ancil Adrian-Paul (Alert)  
Partaw Naderi (ACSF)



## About International Alert

International Alert is an independent peacebuilding organisation working in over twenty countries and territories around the world. We work with people affected by violent conflict as well as at government, EU and UN levels to shape both their policy and practice in building sustainable peace. Our regional work is focused mainly on the African Great Lakes, West Africa, the Caucasus, Colombia, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the Philippines. The issues we work on include business, humanitarian aid and development, gender, security and post-conflict reconstruction.

## Gender and Peacebuilding Work

International Alert's gender work has evolved from our 1999 global campaign, *Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to The Negotiating Table*, that, together with over 200 NGOs successfully advocated for the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, unanimously adopted in October 2000. While we continue to monitor and advocate for the implementation of this groundbreaking resolution, our gender work has shifted its focus from women to a more inclusive approach addressing both women, peace and security issues and the impact of the conflict dynamics and peacebuilding on men, women, boys and girls.

In 2004, we collated the results of our Gender Peace Audit and Global Policy Advocacy projects into a resource entitled *Inclusive Security: Sustainable Peace – A Toolkit for Advocacy and Action*, that was jointly produced with the US-based organisation Women Waging Peace. The Toolkit is a resource for peacebuilders and practitioners – particularly women – to engage in peace and security issues. It provides critical information, strategies and approaches and aims to bridge the divide between the realities of peace activists on conflict, post-conflict or transition areas, and international practitioners and policy-makers with responsibility for designing and implementing programmes in these contexts. Information about the toolkit and on International Alert's work on gender and peacebuilding can be downloaded from our website [www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org). Hard copies can be ordered from International Alert for a small postage and packing fee. Contact details can be found on the website.

## Afghan Civil Society Forum

The Afghan Civil Society Forum works to promote the development of civil society in Afghanistan. It was developed as a partnership between Afghan civil society actors and swisspeace at the request of participants at the first Afghan Civil Society Conference in Bad Honnef, Germany (29 November - 2 December 2001), facilitated by swisspeace parallel to a meeting of political representatives organized by the UN near Bonn. The goal of the conference was to involve Afghan civil society in the peace and reconstruction process of their country in order to achieve a more sustainable post-conflict reconstruction than a simple top-down approach. ACSF which began work in 2002 works with committed and active citizens who continue to participate in the development of a just and equitable society based on the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedom in Afghanistan.

© International Alert and ACSF, 2005

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means; electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without full attribution.

Layout by D. R. Ink, [info@d-r-ink.com](mailto:info@d-r-ink.com)

Printed by Copyprint

Front cover image: ©International Alert: Anonymous Afghan family: Photo by Holly Twiname

# UN SC Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security: Issues and Instruments – The Afghan Context

June 2005

Ancil Adrian-Paul (ALERT) Partaw Naderi (ACSF)

## Contents

Acknowledgments	4	
<b>Section 1</b>	Introduction	5
<b>1.1</b>	Afghanistan - General Information	5
<b>1.2</b>	Participants' Statement	6
<b>Section 2</b>	The Afghanistan National Consultation: Mapping and Feasibility	9
<b>Section 3</b>	Workshop on Women, Peace and Security: The Afghanistan National Consultation	10
<b>3.1</b>	The Process	11
<b>Section 4</b>	Perspectives and Experiences of the Afghan Conflict	11
<b>4.1</b>	Key Points made by Provincial Representatives	12
<b>Section 5</b>	Traditional Practices and their effects on the Population	15
<b>Section 6</b>	Working Groups - The Afghan definition of Peace and Security	16
<b>6.1</b>	Women's definition of Peace and Security	16
<b>Section 7</b>	Ways of addressing the Key Peace and Security Issues Highlighted	17
<b>7.1</b>	Action that should be taken to address the Issues	18
<b>Section 8</b>	Advocacy and Lobbying - Key Instruments	19
<b>8.1</b>	The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women	19
<b>8.2</b>	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security	19
<b>8.3</b>	Afghan Women's Perspectives of UN SC Resolution 1325	20
<b>8.4</b>	Areas that need to be further addressed by the Resolution	20
<b>Section 9</b>	Conclusion	21
<b>Appendix I</b>	Key Points from speeches made by Dignitaries	22
<b>Appendix II</b>	Alert's Gender and Peacebuilding Programme	26
<b>Appendix III</b>	About ACSF	28
<b>Appendix IV</b>	Conference Agenda	30
<b>Appendix V</b>	List of Participants	33
<b>Appendix VI</b>	Evaluation	35
<b>Appendix VII</b>	Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women	36
<b>Appendix VIII</b>	United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325	45

## Acronyms

UN DAW	United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women
UN DDA	United Nations Department for Disarmament
UN DPA	United Nations Department for Political Affairs
DPKO	United Nations Department for Peacekeeping Operations
EU	European Union
OCHA	Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Fund for Women
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration

## Acknowledgements

International Alert (Alert) and the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF) would like to thank all the participants who attended the workshop for their enthusiastic participation.

We would also like to thank the following:

### **From Afghanistan:**

*Facilitation:* Asila Wardak (UNIFEM), Shiela Samimi (AWN) and Marzia Meena (ACSF)

*English reporting, translations and interpreting:* Jawed Neshat, Jawed Nader and Abdullah Lali Wardak.

*Dari and Pashto reporting:* Partaw Naderi, Nabi Tadbir

*Logistics:* Malalai Safar, Fariha Sahar, Noor Ahmad

*Advisor:* Susanne Schmeidl (swisspeace)

### **From the United Kingdom:**

Phil Vernon, Nicola Johnston, Maria Olson, Bilal Patel, Guillermo Suarez and Holly Twiname for her preparatory work on the mapping of issues and organisations completed in 2003.

We would also like to thank all the staff of ACSF that assisted in making this event a success. ACSF and International Alert would also like to thank Ancil Adrian-Paul (International Alert) for the conceptualisation and management of the project and Aziz Rafiee and Marzia Meena (ACSF) for managing the project in Afghanistan. Aziz Rafiee and Ancil Adrian-Paul were the main facilitators.

International Alert would especially like to thank the Project Zivik at ifa – Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen (Germany), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Finland) and the Rausing Trust (London) for their financial support, without which the project would have failed.

This report was originally written in Dari by Partaw Naderi (ACSF), translated into English by Abdullah Lali Wardak (ACSF). Aziz Rafiee, Jawed Nader (ACSF) and Susanne Schmeidl (swisspeace) edited the re-written English version produced by Ancil Adrian-Paul (Alert).

Finally, we would like to thank WOMANKIND Worldwide (WK) for financing the printing of this report. WK (<http://www.womankind.org.uk>) is an international women's human rights and development organisation working in partnership with 70 organisations around the world. The key aims of their work are to advance women's status and well being through political and civil participation, reduce violence against women and inform and influence policy and practice at the local, regional and international level.

WK currently provides technical and financial support to three Afghan women's organisations focusing on promoting women's equal participation in governance, by building awareness among civil society and policy makers of women's human rights, as well as by providing educational support services to women from a wide social and geographical background in the area of education. The rationale for WK's programme is based on provisions contained in UN SCR 1325. Acknowledging the role women can play in promoting peace and security, WK also supports a women's peace-building programme in the north of the country.

# UN SC Resolution 1325 Women, Peace and Security Issues and Instruments The Afghan Context

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Afghanistan – General Information

Afghanistan is addressing development and striving to secure a lasting and sustainable peace. The peace and reconstruction process that was initiated with the establishment of a new government in Afghanistan provides the Afghans and the international community with an opportunity to draw on lessons learnt from within their own country and to benefit from experiences drawn from other post-conflict areas. Dr. Huma Ahmed-Ghosh, a female Afghan intellectual, contends that Afghanistan's economic marginalisation, social disorder and political dislocation can be conceptualised as deficiencies that women can manoeuvre to their advantage. She states that under the current economic conditions, women could use this opportunity to redefine their roles in the family and community in ways that improve their lives and contribute to the rehabilitation of the nation.<sup>i</sup>

One of the key opportunities that needs to be seized, is the pursuit of a gender-sensitive reconstruction process. If women are to assume their rightful place alongside men, mechanisms need to be put in place that take full account of the rights of both men and women. Instruments that are binding need to be drawn on in legal, judicial and civic reform to prevent discrimination against women in Afghanistan. United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 in particular, emphasises the importance of women's full participation in the rebuilding of their countries and highlights the unique contribution that women can make to peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts. Yet, gender is still not fully integrated into the reconstruction process. Although promoting gender considerations and gender awareness, and increasing women's participation, is both challenging and complicated in the Afghan context, it is important for the promotion of sustainable development and a just and lasting peace. Gender inequality and women's exclusion hinders progress by denying one half of the population equal opportunities.

Even though change takes time, Afghanistan can cite some progress in the area of women's rights over the past three and a half years. The appointment of the new government has resulted in positive changes for women, for example, the mandatory wearing of the burqua was abolished and two women were appointed into the cabinet of ministers with portfolios for Women's Affairs and Health. The new Afghan Constitution adopted at the beginning of 2004 allows two seats in each province for women. Of more than 8 million Afghans who voted in the presidential poll of October 2004, more than 40 percent were female. During the democratic elections in Afghanistan, there was a woman among 16 presidential candidates. Yet, discrimination against, and abuse of women continues. For example, human rights abuses against women such as domestic violence and forced marriages are all too common. Many women in the country suffer from poor access to legal resources and exclusion from public life. Girls are still prevented from attending school due to traditions that keep them at home. Childhood and early marriages are still prevalent –some of which are entered into as a means of resolving disputes.<sup>ii</sup>

It is within this context that International Alert's Gender and Peacebuilding Programme collaborated with the Afghan Civil Society Forum to organise and deliver the first ever Afghan consultation on the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (November – December 2004).

i. Dr Huma Ahmed Ghosh. A History of Women in Afghanistan: Lessons learnt for the Future in *Journal of International Women's Studies*; Vol.4 #3, May 2003.

ii. President Hamid Karzai, International Women's Day Rally, Kabul, May 8th 2005. See also the very interesting research report *Bad: Painful Sedative. Women and Children Legal Research Foundation, (Kabul) 2004* [available from [wclrf@yahoo.com](mailto:wclrf@yahoo.com)]

The capacity building workshop on Women, Peace and Security conceptualised by International Alert, organised by the Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF) and facilitated by ACSF and International Alert is part of the Gender Peace Audit project of Alert's Gender and Peacebuilding programme. It was the fifth and final consultation in the series on resolution 1325. Preceding national consultations were held in Nepal and Nigeria in 2002. Regional consultations were held in the Caucasus (2002) and in South Asia (2003). These consultations aim to bridge the gap between global policy and the practical realities faced by women at the local, national and regional levels in post-conflict contexts.

The outcomes of these consultations are disseminated to global, regional and national policy makers for the development and refinement of international policies and practices relating to women, peace and security through the Global Policy Advocacy project of Alert's Gender and Peacebuilding Programme. The consultations generate and contribute to local, national and regional activities and strategies to address issues and concerns that affect women's peace and security.

This consultation aimed to bring together women, men and youth from different provinces of Afghanistan to discuss peace and security issues affecting women within the framework of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, and with reference to the (CEDAW) – The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (see Appendices for the texts of these two documents). The workshop aimed to focus on three key themes. These were:

- Afghan perspectives of the conflict with a focus on women's perspectives
- Priority issues that need addressing in order to promote peace and security, and
- Key instruments that women could use to ensure their inclusion in the reconstruction process

During the consultation, participants identified shared concerns and discussed the priority issues affecting women's peace and security. As a result, they developed targeted recommendations related to the implementation of resolution 1325.

## **1.2 Participants Statement**

Reconstructing Afghanistan and improving circumstances for Afghan women after nearly 25 years of war, are long-term processes that require sustained commitment from the international community and determination from the Afghan government. Since the fall of the Taliban and the start of Afghanistan's reconstruction process, a small minority of women and girls, mostly the educated and the professional, are benefiting from the changes that have taken place. However, overall the majority of women continue to face challenges of illiteracy, lack of access to healthcare, economic opportunities and human rights violations, especially in the provinces.

The Afghan Civil Society Forum, and International Alert conducted a 3-day workshop on Women, Peace and Security from November 30 to December 2, 2004. Representatives from civil society, the government, United Nations agencies, national and international NGOs and education institutions participated. The core issues discussed in this workshop were women's needs in terms of security, peace and stability, human rights, their participation

and decision-making in social and political affairs, in the establishment of economic programmes for women's self-reliance. The participants considered the issues critical to the reconstruction process and urged that the responsible authorities take serious action. Resolution 1325 was considered to be an important tool for the promotion of women's human rights as well as for their participation in peace and security processes at all levels. Participants have addressed the following recommendations to the Afghan government and the United Nations.

## **A. To the Afghan Government**

By signing Resolution 1325 and other international agreements, the Afghan government agrees to promote women's participation in peace and security processes at all levels. Afghanistan is obliged to implement this resolution as it is a member of the United Nations and has adhered to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Charter. It must honour its obligations. The implementation of resolution 1325 in Afghanistan must be monitored and evaluated with respect for Afghan cultural and social values and Islamic law. Women should mobilise so that they can better monitor its implementation and demand accountability from the Afghan government.

### ***Political participation***

In accordance with UN SC Resolution 1325

- Promote and support women's active participation in political processes
- Develop mechanisms and make opportunities available for women to participate in the reconstruction efforts
- Appoint more women to ministerial portfolios in line with their experience and qualifications

### ***Security***

- Maintain a safe and secure environment that will promote women's participation in social and political activities
- Ensure that women are included in an effective disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process
- Address de-mining issues
- Reform the police and the military and ensure women's inclusion in the reformed structures

### ***Human rights and legal issues***

- Create mechanisms to address women's rights and prevent human rights violations
- Promote public awareness of Islamic and national laws – especially among women
- Amend the Afghan civil law to address issues currently affecting civil society
- Create a legitimate mechanism to prevent domestic violence, enforced marriages and early and childhood marriages
- Establish an authorised commission to monitor and promote the rule of law in Afghanistan

### *Domestication and harmonisation of international and Afghan laws*

- Enforce international treaties and resolutions that have been signed, and/or ratified by the Afghan government and harmonise these with domestic laws
- Take immediate action to implement resolution 1325
- Report on CEDAW in a timely manner and involve civil society in alternative reports

### *Education*

- Revitalise the education system and prioritise the education of women and girls
- Establish educational and vocational centres for women and girls
- Initiate adult literacy classes

### *Socio-economic issues*

- Initiate development programmes for women and girls in the capital, provinces and rural areas
- Support the disabled, widowed, homeless and unemployed women and create employment opportunities for them
- Drug addiction is becoming a serious problem. Promote a ban on poppy cultivation and smuggling to prevent the addiction of women and girls. Provide alternative income generation activities for women through initiatives such as loans and micro-credit schemes
- Improve the lives of returnees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) by establishing social welfare and employment centres for them

### *Children*

- Respect the rights of children
- Eradicate child slavery
- Eradicate early and childhood marriages
- End sexual abuse of children

### *Justice*

Women in Afghanistan need justice and justice needs peace

- Stop the kidnapping, trafficking and sexual exploitation of women
- Address issues of impunity, redress and reparations
- Put in place mechanisms to protect the civil, political, cultural and social rights of women

### *Health*

Health is a priority issue.

- Address mental health issues resulting from psycho-social trauma
- Construct more health centres and clinics and staff them adequately with women and men
- Introduce family planning issues into all clinics and centres

## B. To the United Nations

### *Funding*

The Secretary-General of the United Nations must allocate funds that can be accessed by Afghan women to engage in peace and security activities at all levels – including the decision-making level. In particular, Afghan women want assistance for disabled women, widows and children.

### *Monitoring, Accountability and Reporting*

The United Nations must design and put in place a reporting mechanism for Member States to report back on resolution 1325 and for civil society to monitor its implementation effectively – especially with regards to the protection of women's rights and accountability for violence against women.

## 2. The Afghanistan National Consultation: Mapping and Feasibility

The activities in Afghanistan began with a feasibility study and mapping of women, peace and security issues in October 2003. The mapping was conducted on the basis of interviews and desk research carried out in the UK, as well as meetings held in Kabul with NGOs, women's groups, UN agencies, government officials and key individuals.

### *Objectives*

The objectives of the feasibility study were:

- To meet with a number of organisations including women's groups and other NGOs, research institutes, the UN and government officials to explore issues affecting women's peace and security in the Afghan context and to establish the level of awareness of resolution 1325 among women and women's organisations.
- To establish what contribution International Alert could make to women's peace and security in Afghanistan, if a consultation on women, peace and security issues was organised – taking resolution 1325 as its focus.
- To identify two or three potential representative local partner organisations with whom Alert could work in organising a consultation on resolution 1325.
- To identify whether Afghan women would accept the participation of moderate mullahs at such a meeting.

The feasibility study resulted in the Afghan national consultation on Women, Peace and Security held in November-December 2004.

### 3. Workshop on Women, Peace and Security: The Afghanistan National Consultation

The Women, Peace and Security workshop opened on Tuesday, 31 November 2004 in the Nooristan Hall of the Intercontinental Hotel, Kabul. The workshop lasted for three days. Forty-five participants (36 women and 9 men) from Kabul and other provinces of the country attended the workshop.

#### Objectives

- To provide an opportunity for participants to share their experiences of conflict and to link the issues highlighted to resolution 1325.
- To create an opportunity for women's organisations from different regions in Afghanistan to come together, discuss and analyse their own perspectives of issues affecting their security and ways of contribution to sustainable peace in Afghanistan.
- To identify the international treaties that Afghanistan has signed to date. From among those, identify relevant national regulations that could be used by participants to engage with local and national policy makers to promote women's participation in the post-conflict reconstruction of Afghanistan.
- To present and unpack resolution 1325 and elicit the perspectives of participants on how it could be used as a tool for advocacy within the Afghan context, and
- To develop recommendations for follow-up advocacy work at the national, regional and international levels.



Participant to the workshop reporting back the results of a group discussion.  
© International Alert, 2005

### 3.1 The Process

The workshop was conducted in Dari. It was inaugurated with verses from the holy Koran followed by presentations from a number of key speakers: Dr Sima Samar, Head of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission; Mr Gul Madadzai, Head of the Human Rights Department of the Ministry of the Interior; Professor Gul Rahman Qazi, Faculty of Law, Kabul University; Her Excellency Mahbooba Hoqooqmal, State Minister for Women's Affairs; Habiba Sarabi, Minister for Women's Affairs; Nafisa Sultani, Head of the Disabled Women Organisation; Pashtoon Shahna, representative of Badakhshan Women; Dr. Akram Khpalwak, the youth representative; Maria Sazawar, representative from Mazar-i-Sharif and Hulan Khatibi representative from Herat (see list of participants in Appendix V). This national workshop was well attended by women, men and youth who participated actively, engaging in presentations, small group discussions and plenaries.

Following the presentations by the dignitaries, participants were welcomed by ACSF on behalf of International Alert and themselves. Participants were asked to list their expectations of the workshop. These are enumerated in the box below.

#### Expectations

- Discipline - must keep to time when making interventions
- Be focused - not deviate from the subject being discussed
- Participants should be on time for the workshop
- Daily programme should begin and end early to comply with the existing curfew
- There should be a follow-up mechanism so that participants maintain contact
- Final report must be distributed to all participants

## 4. Perspectives and Experiences of the Afghan conflict

### *Key Issues highlighted*

Afghan women are the victims of social violence – including trafficking and sexual harassment. Women's rights are violated by harmful traditional practices both during the war and in peacetime. The low level of awareness of women's rights can result in domestic violence.

The Afghan Constitution includes principles on gender equality. These need to be respected in order to enhance women's freedom as women are the more vulnerable and disadvantaged half of society. Furthermore, they need security and support in order to facilitate their inclusion in social issues.

- The need for security is urgent. Security for women could be improved through disarmament of armed actors. This should be addressed as a priority.
- Women should be included in governance issues and in parliament but their inclusion should be based on merit and qualifications and not be merely symbolic.
- Women's issues are normally dealt with under tribal and traditional laws but should really be addressed under the national constitution. The Constitution should provide a legal framework to support women.

- Women carry out the most difficult work in Afghan society. For example, they are forced to work in the poppy production process – which results in the daily increase of drug addicted women.
- Many women have a symbolic role in Afghan society. However, women should have an active role and decision-making power in the reconstruction of Afghanistan and in the restoration of peace in the society.
- Health – including mental health, and family planning in particular are priority issues. Family planning must be included in the general health curriculum and must be available in all health centres.

#### **4.1 Key points made by provincial representatives**

##### **Human rights**

Human rights is a critical issue. Since the civil war began, human rights have been eroded. Now that there is a chance for peace, the protection and promotion of human rights is essential. Women should be made aware of human rights, democracy, individual rights and freedom. Currently, women writers, journalists and artistes are under threat from armed men. Women do not have opportunities for education and therefore the rate of illiteracy among Afghan women is higher than that among men.

There is a wide gap between the reality of women's lives in Afghanistan and their essential rights. The recent elections held in 2004 is a good example. Many women participated with much enthusiasm in the election process, but there were some who were threatened by their husbands and other family members for participating in the process. Some women cast their votes for those candidates who were the choice of their husbands or family elders. These facts show that although there is engagement in political activities, the role of women in the political environment is largely symbolic and that they do not as yet have decision-making powers. Meanwhile, as stated by the participant from Herat, forced marriages continue in many areas.

##### **Widows and the Disabled**

The provincial representative from Badakhshan spoke about the suffering of widows under the Taliban regime. In almost three decades of war in Afghanistan, thousands of women not only lost their husbands, but, due to bomb blasts and rocket attacks many of them also became disabled. They need assistance, but no one has as yet taken any action to help. In most families the sole financial supporters are widows who live in abject poverty and unemployment. The government has not taken any action to design employment projects for widows. She further reported that because of the repression they suffered, women established the women's Shuras or Councils and that she was elected as the Chair of the Reconstruction Council in 1998. During the first year the women's councils faced many problems. She explained that at first, every Friday - when she was speaking - the Imam of the Mosque spoke against her. Some moderate Imams co-operated with the women while others created problems – making it difficult for the women's councils to organise effectively. The representative requested that all women working on women's affairs and rights should unite and work together for the betterment of women.

The representative made a plea that each ministry should recruit five percent of disabled women. She also requested that workshops and seminars such as the current initiative should be extended to other provinces such as Herat and Mazar-i-Sharif where women's status is relatively advanced.

### Youth

The representative told participants that one of the main problems is the traditional Afghan culture. He said that women and girls are not provided with opportunities for education. Additionally, in some of the provinces of the country, due to gender discrimination, many families do not allow young girls to continue their education after primary school. Child marriages are also a problem. In many provinces girls are married to boys younger than they are and this can later result in domestic violence and early divorces.

He also said that more attention needs to be paid to the provinces and requested that the Ministry of Women's Affairs and their provincial representatives take note. He exhorted the society to fight for the rights of women and girls that are sold and trafficked. He further said that over 80 percent of Afghanistan's women are illiterate, yet no one has begun building schools for women in the provinces. Furthermore, no one has even spoken to the women themselves to understand their needs.

### Violence Against Women

The representative from Mazar-i-Sharif told participants that there are numerous problems. She said that Mazar-i-Sharif is a civilised society. However, despite women's relatively equal status there, they still face problems. Women artistes are threatened for performing together with men. She said that the Women Directorate of the Ministry of Women's Affairs has not worked for women, nor have they invited them to discuss issues. The representative highlighted the insecurity that women face, including threats by warlords when they leave their homes.

Domestic violence is a serious problem resulting in women leaving home and having to beg or, due to economic needs, they may work on the poppy farms, often becoming addicted to the drugs. The representative gave the example of two teachers who were killed by their families during the last two years. She said that there are many other problems but that despite the threats, women have shown great courage – especially during the 2004 elections.

### Refugee, internally displaced people and returnees

Another aspect of the problem is the plight of returnees. Many young Afghan women refugees from Iran are being deported back to Afghanistan. Because of distance from their families and lack of access to proper living conditions, they are at risk of becoming victims of sexual violence and exploitation. Thus, there is a great need to raise the awareness of men about the issues facing refugee, internally displaced and women returnees. At the same time, women should be made aware of their rights and how to fight for them.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimates that there are 73 000 returnees from Iran. Currently, the lack of social, health and educational services for them lead to homelessness, unemployment, diseases and poverty. Research conducted in Herat demonstrates that forced marriage is a particular problem among

returnees from Iran, often leading to cases of self-immolation. For women returnees who face unemployment, social violence and tensions, committing suicide is an everyday issue. Attempts have been made to advocate, record and document these incidents but there is a lack of attention to the issue by the central government which should intervene and take effective and practical action. Women's organisations and others in the province are trying to develop a task force to engage in dialogue with the government on the need to address this issue. Currently, only non-governmental organisations and the United Nations are assisting.

#### Summary of issues identified during the opening sessions that need to be urgently addressed

- Internal and external conflict – including social conflicts and domestic violence
- Lack of education and low literacy rate
- Socio- economic issues including unemployment and poverty and the eradication of poppy cultivation
- Rule of law and governance issues
- Security and security sector reform issues including DDR and the clearance of land mines
- Women's exclusion from participation in social, economic and political processes
- Need for national unity including the issuance of National Identity cards for women
- Observance of human rights including banning the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women
- Improvement of the agricultural sector
- Strengthening the population's capacity to engage in peacebuilding
- Eradication of ethnic tensions and the elimination of harmful traditional practices
- Fostering the role of the private sector in promoting peace, including providing security, and micro-credit opportunities
- Use of the mass media to raise awareness of women's inclusion in peace and security processes
- Improvement of health facilities and the need for address mental health issues
- Domestication and harmonisation of international and national laws

## 5. Traditional practices and their effects on the population

### Traditional practices can

- Negatively affect women's rights, including legal rights
- Contribute to illiteracy and lack of cultural awareness among people
- Encourage the dominance of men in the society
- Encourage the narrow-mindedness of some elders
- Contribute to the existence and empowerment of irresponsible armed groups
- Promote social and domestic violence
- Aggravate cultural poverty and lack of awareness among women regarding their rights and responsibilities
- Foster inaccurate religious interpretation that hinder the human rights of women
- Encourage discrimination against women and the lack of employment opportunities for them
- Encourage the exclusion of women from decision-making levels at the socio-political levels
- Hinder opportunities for frank and fruitful discussions between women and men
- Promote the dominance of tribal laws in the society
- Lead to internal displacement and forced migration
- Increase forced and childhood marriages, and extravagant expenses in wedding and mourning ceremonies.
- Encourage the lack of a consolidated educational curriculum in the country and illiteracy among women
- Encourage mental illnesses due to psycho-social effects of the war and violence.

Following the presentations by the provincial representatives, participants were divided into 3 break-out groups to discuss how Afghans define peace and security with a special focus on women's definition of the issue. The groups were led by external facilitators supported by ACSF staff. They discussed many issues, including what can be done to promote peace and security in Afghanistan. Each working group was allocated 90 minutes after which there was a tea break followed by a feed-back session and discussion. The results of these working groups have been summarised below.

## 6. Working groups - The Afghan Definition of Peace and Security

The Afghan definition of peace and security includes the enforcement of law, overall disarmament across the country, the prevention of war and conflicts and the elimination of violence and prejudicial ideas. For Afghans, the existence of an economically and socially stable central government, freedom of speech and the active – rather than symbolic participation of women in politics are all aspects of peace and security. Participants said that national solidarity, a ban on poppy cultivation, trade, trafficking and production as well as the establishment of an accountability system, the implementation of the law and the elimination of tribal, gender and regional discrimination could lead to peace and security. Participants also highlighted the need for a strong government that would promote national unity and eradicate ethnic differences.

### 6.1 Women's definition of peace and security

Women participants agreed with the issues highlighted and in particular the need for education as well as access to opportunities for employment. The women emphasised that they want peace for their children so that there can be development and that children can be well educated. They want a good future for the next generation of Afghans. Women defined peace and security as the absence of war and violent conflict and where life is normally run. They emphasised that in a secure environment, human beings feel responsible for each other and feel secure physically and mentally. Thus, living in peace and stability and having respect for each other's ideas is seen as security. They also stated that security is having stability and political and social conditions that allow individuals and families to live in peace with acceptable social and domestic relationships.

Participants highlighted the nurturing role of women and the importance that they have in rehabilitating their families and the society – transferring strong but gender aware cultural traditions to future generations – in line with Islamic and national values.

Women in the new Afghanistan believe that, with training and support from the government, they can increase their political participation and can occupy more than twenty percent of seats in parliament. Women of merit, chosen for their qualifications and experience, should be allowed to participate in governance processes as well as in social and cultural life. The government should aim to create a society where women can aspire to be employed in the police force and the military, run for President or be in the Cabinet.

The women who participated in the workshop noted that women are half of the Afghan society and have the right to be involved in the economic sector – in big business as well as in micro-credit initiatives – including agriculture and livestock and in non-governmental organisations and vocational centres. By establishing training centres and designing development and economic projects, women can become self-reliant and secure economic independence.

Participants highlighted the need for women to participate equally with men in conducting meetings and seminars and would like women to have the opportunity to participate in sports activities, the arts and in the media.

## 7. Ways of addressing the key Peace and Security Issues Highlighted

Participants discussed ways in which these issues could be addressed by civil society, government and other actors in the Afghan society. They highlighted the need to strengthen awareness of the issues among the population and to promote a sense of responsibility and accountability. They also emphasised that social and economic reforms must be implemented in Afghanistan with the support and assistance of religious personalities and influential provincial figures.

**The role of civil society:** Civil society should play a greater role in monitoring the implementation of government programmes and policies, in promoting administrative and judicial reforms and in the identification of priorities for the reconstruction of the society. Additionally, civil society organisations should be involved in the enforcement of the Afghan Constitution and its principles.

**Promotion of human rights:** All sectors of the society should promote human rights, - particularly women's human rights. Women themselves should be provided with training and made aware both of their rights and how to protect and promote women's rights. Participants suggested that the mass media and local mosques could be used to strengthen women's awareness of critical issues. They also advocated that the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission – which in 2004 recorded 110 cases of self-immolation by women attempting to escape forced marriages and domestic violence – be given a more prominent role. In addition, the Afghan constitution must be used as a valid source and guideline in all walks of social and political life, and efforts must be made to ensure that there is freedom of speech. Priority focus should be placed on the following:

**Employment for women:** Women can be employed in centres promoting women's handicrafts and in factories as well as at all levels within state structures - including the decision-making level. The structure of the government employment programme and that of non-governmental organisations should be amended in order to facilitate the recruitment of more women. Together with these opportunities, consideration should be given to women's need for child care. Thus, the Afghan government could consider constructing local nurseries for women in employment. However, attempts must be made to move beyond marginal income of handicrafts to micro-credit, loans for women and similar initiatives.

### **Inclusion in political processes including post-conflict reconstruction**

Women's participation in all walks of life especially in political and security issues must be promoted. Women's political awareness should be strengthened through training on key issues for example through long-term training programmes established within Afghanistan as well as in external countries such as the United Kingdom and the USA. It would also be beneficial if Afghan women could have training experiences in other Islamic and Muslim countries. Women could also develop their political awareness through participation in shuras (local women's councils). Women should also be included in the DDR process. Resolution 1325, CEDAW and the national constitution should be used in promoting women's inclusion in parliament.

**Increasing literacy:** The Afghan government should allocate a budget for increasing the standard and quality of adult education as well as that provided in universities and schools. Vocational and professional programmes should be developed for illiterate persons including soldiers who join the demobilisation programme, and special attention should be paid to the specific needs of the disabled, the widowed and the homeless.

**Provision of housing and shelter:** Housing and shelter should be provided to all women who are homeless, including disabled and the widowed.

**Promotion of health:** Health clinics could be established for drug addicts and mechanisms should be put in place to prevent poppy cultivation and the production of narcotics. Mental health issues should also be addressed.

**Impunity and justice:** The Afghan government should consider issuing a criminal justice Bill for those who violate women and a ban should be placed on the trafficking and sexual harassment of women and girls. This should be linked to gender-sensitive and gender-aware training for the police. Mechanisms should also be put in place to monitor the Bill once it has been agreed.

**Role of the private sector:** The private sector must play a role in the reconstruction of the society and all existing natural resources must be utilised.

**The role of the International Community:** There is a need to focus the attention of the international community on Afghanistan and its issues. In this respect, a strong foreign policy must be developed.

### 7.1 Action that should be taken to address the issues highlighted

- Create employment opportunities for women
- Reform the national army
- Reform the police and include women in the new police force
- Provide gender sensitisation training to the police
- Establish basic literacy and vocational training schools
- Conduct training seminars and workshops on management and the economy
- Raise awareness of key issues including the conservation of good values, through mass media programmes
- Issue national identity cards to all Afghan people – including Afghan women
- Distribute agricultural seeds to farmers and monitor the market for agricultural produce
- Create a well balanced national budget with a gender allocation
- Collect national revenue from all provinces of the country and reallocate it to assist the population in these provinces
- Encourage national and local products and handicrafts
- Encourage the private sector to play a role in the reconstruction of the society

## 8. Advocacy and Lobbying - Key Instruments

### 8.1 The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has six parts and twenty-nine articles. It includes provisions on discrimination in political and public life, education, employment and equal pay; health care, financial benefits and property, equality in marriage and family, as well as issues of violence and trafficking. Just as gender discrimination can affect each area of a women's life, so too can CEDAW positively affect women's lives in each of these areas. In addition, CEDAW can be an extremely important resource for two key issues in today's world - ensuring women's human rights during the rebuilding of a nation and addressing HIV/AIDS.

The CEDAW was developed in 1979 by the United Nations General Assembly. Afghanistan signed the CEDAW in 1980. Most women around the world consider CEDAW to be the best tool for defending their rights. In CEDAW, there are clear principles relating to the improvement of women's life, the elimination of all kinds of prejudices against women, the elimination of sexual abuse, the trafficking of women and their participation in political and social affairs. This essential and powerful resource can be utilised to make women's human rights an inalienable right as the new constitution and legislation is drafted and civil society rebuilt. Women must be included as equals in the new Afghanistan. The women of Afghanistan need CEDAW to ensure that their human rights are protected. However, it is important that CEDAW is translated into official national languages. According to Afghan women participating in the workshop, if the convention is implemented, there will be many useful amendments in judicial law beneficial to women. The Afghan government must also allocate an adequate budget for the implementation of CEDAW because it is very important that women participate with men in long term social and political programmes.

### 8.2 United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security

Resolution 1325 was adopted by the United Nations Security Council on 31st October 2000. It is seen by many as a historic document - a watershed political framework that makes women and a gender perspective - relevant to all aspects of conflict prevention and peacebuilding - from peace agreements to reconstructing war-torn societies. UN SC Resolution 1325 has developed a world-wide support constituency, lobbying for its practical and context-specific implementation to benefit women in post-conflict situations such as Afghanistan. Participants to the workshop were told that resolution 1325 complements CEDAW and that they should be used together as strong advocacy and lobbying tools to promote women's inclusion in peace and security processes.

Following the presentation, participants worked in small groups to further discuss the resolution with a focus on linking it to the key peace and security issues that they had identified, highlighting gaps and developing targeted recommendations for national and international policy makers.

### 8.3 Afghan women's perspectives on UN SC Resolution 1325

Participants appreciated resolution 1325. They highlighted the fact that DDR – a major peace and security issue in transition Afghanistan – is addressed by the resolution. They believe that action should be taken in accordance with the resolution to address this problem in Afghan society.

Participants also felt that as the resolution deals with peace and security issues it could promote the restoration of peace in Afghanistan through dialogue between peacekeepers and the women's councils. They emphasised that relevant sections of the resolution could provide a basis for initiating contacts with peacebuilding practitioners within the country.

Human rights were highlighted as a crucial area where the resolution could be effectively utilised. Article 22 of the 2004 Afghan Constitution enshrines gender equality. Participants therefore felt that the resolution could be used to assist the Afghan government formulate policies to address women's rights and to define a 'non-prejudicial policy against women'. On the other hand, participants believe that women should assess and understand those parts of the national constitution that provide clear guidance about their rights with men so that they can demand their fundamental rights. In order to do this, women need both to know about, and to understand the resolution.

### 8.4 Areas that need to be further addressed by the resolution

In relating resolution 1325 to the peace and security context of Afghanistan, the issues highlighted below were identified as needing greater attention:

**Language:** The preamble to the resolution is written in weak language. This needs to be addressed either in this resolution or in any subsequent resolution. On the other hand, the principles are written in complicated language and this should be simplified. The resolution reads as a theoretic rather than a practical document.

**Universality:** The resolution does not address the needs of women in all contexts. For example it does not address the specific needs of disabled and widowed women and their participation in the political and social processes.

**Reporting and accountability:** Resolution 1325 lacks reporting, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Additionally, there are no accountability mechanisms to ensure that governments comply with the resolution or to hold them accountable in case of non-compliance.

**Lack of awareness of the resolution:** The United Nations and Member States should ensure that there is adequate knowledge of the resolution. For example, women in every country should be made aware of the resolution either by their government or by the United Nations and it should be translated into local and national languages. While it is true that some civil society organisations are engaged in translating the resolution into different languages (see [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org)), more needs to be done.

**Redress and reparations:** There are no mechanisms to provide redress and reparations to those – especially women – that have been subjected to gender based sexual or other types of violence.

## 9. Conclusion

The Afghan participants enjoyed the workshop. It provided men, women and youth of both sexes as well as representatives from government, universities, international organisations, Afghan Ministers, Afghan civil society and the media, with an opportunity to discuss key peace and security issues and strategise on solutions to the problems identified. As can be seen in the body of the report, participants highlighted the need for the issues identified to be addressed urgently in order to promote women's inclusion in peace and security processes. The participants considered the issues discussed as critical and urge the relevant authorities to take action to address them effectively.

The issues discussed in the workshop and the conclusions drawn by the participants were reinforced at a follow-up initiative in 2005. Following the 2004 workshop, International Alert, in collaboration with the US based Policy Council on Afghan Women, organised a panel discussion on Gender Issues for the Reconstruction of Afghanistan, at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (New York - March 20, 2005). Speakers on the panel included participants from the 2004 Afghan workshop. The panel highlighted many of the same issues including:

- The promotion of greater participation of well-qualified women in political decision-making
- Issues of access to justice and the importance of reaching out to remote rural areas with mobile awareness raising teams. Working through family courts and the provision of support to more women lawyers was also highlighted; and
- The need for equal economic opportunities for women by providing access to private enterprise development funds. Access to resources is essential for women's self-reliance and dignity.



Afghan women and men discussing peace and security issues.  
Photo by Kakar December 2004 © International Alert, 2005

## Appendices

### Appendix I: Key points from speeches made by Dignitaries

#### **Dr Sima Samar, Head of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission.**

Dr Samar highlighted the vulnerability of women around the world and in Afghanistan. She also addressed the issue of social violence against women, trafficking and sexual violence including in Afghanistan.

Dr Samar told the participants that violations against women are widespread and do not only affect women in Afghanistan. She pointed out that lack of awareness, information and education as well as mental health problems often contribute to such violations against women.

These are fundamental problems and take a long period of time to be resolved. Dr Samar suggested that analysis should be made of the negative and positive aspects of Afghan traditions. Afghans should begin by examining themselves. Civil society should be active and engage in activities that are meaningful - not symbolic. Civil society actors should conduct an analysis of resolution 1325 and mechanisms for its implementation in Afghanistan.

Dr Samar emphasised that Afghan women should understand the content of resolution 1325 and practice it – especially as one of the main objectives of the resolution is to provide opportunities for women - enabling them to take part in the restoration of peace and security.

She further highlighted the fact that Afghanistan is obliged to implement this resolution, as it is a member of the United Nations and has to adhere to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Charter. Afghans should proceed carefully, as due to inappropriate approaches in the past, many Afghans have suffered and women have been the main victims. Afghans should learn the lessons from the past as an extremist approach may again create difficulties for women. In this respect, the resolution could be very useful and Afghans should put pressure on the government to take immediate steps for its effective implementation.

She stated that it is very important for women to have self-confidence and not to quit the struggle. Negative action in the name of religion and tradition should cease.

#### **Gul Madadzai – Head, Human Rights section of Afghan Ministry of the Interior**

Protection is a priority. There is a great need for training and workshops and awareness raising on gender issues and on violations. What is being done is very little compared to the problems. Activities need to be expanded to provincial police headquarters. Reducing violations against women is the responsibility of every Afghan.

Women need to join the police force. It is unfortunate that we have not yet been able to secure the expected number of women. It would be a positive step to include women in police departments. Women should be a part of policing and should be involved in different activities. Mr Madadzai requested that the participants should persuade other women to join the police force, especially the human rights departments of the provincial police departments. He reiterated their interest in admitting large numbers of women to

the police academy to serve the Afghan nation. He said that during the adoption campaign only twenty girls from twenty high schools were ready to be enrolled in the police force. He also stated that the reformed police force should include both women and men and should defend women's rights because without women any action is incomplete.

**Associate Professor Gul Rahman Qazi – Lecturer, Faculty of Law, Kabul University**

Professor Qazi highlighted the issue of equal rights for men and women. He highlighted the fact that Adam and Eve make society. Man alone cannot make a society. Therefore men need women and women need men to create an equal society.

Professor Qazi told participants that in Islam, God says – 'pray to me and have respect for your parents - both men and women.' Thus men and women should be equal.

In some Koran verses it says: 'I give dignity to children of Adam'. This does not mean only to men, but to both men and women.

The Professor highlighted the need for women's involvement and inclusion in business and politics, pointing out that in the Prophet's time, women also took part in politics. According to the professor, the Afghan culture respects women. While in other societies, women are used as 'tools of entertainment', in Afghanistan, women have a very strong role. However, the long war has adversely affected both the role of women and men's attitude to them. The war is now over and change is needed. The war increased violence against women. It is time to think of the approaches that can best solve the problems caused by war. Afghans should identify the problems and search for solutions.

**Her Excellency - Mahbooba Hoqooqmal – State Minister of Women's Affairs**

Minister Hoqooqmal told participants that in society, the important things are security, peace and human rights. She emphasised that the government must provide security and promote peace. The Minister told participants that Islam has given privileges to both men and women and noted that during war, both men and women are affected. She pointed out that in countries like Afghanistan, because of the war, and due to cultural norms taking precedence over Islamic values, women's rights are adversely affected. She said that Afghans should respect both the Afghan society and Islamic values.

The Minister highlighted the fact that women are not allowed to study outside of the home and that Islam provides for the rights of women but that culture constrains these rights. Another example is that women are perceived negatively in the family with, for example, men in rural areas being ashamed to speak about their wives. This, she said is due to ignorance and lack of awareness. She told participants that the rights of men and women are clearly defined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and in The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and highlighted the fact that all societies have laws and rules by which they are governed. However, she said, the rule of law in Afghanistan needs to be strengthened and women's rights respected. In Afghan society there are still examples of physical torture of women, as for example in Herat province. Moreover, early marriage is still a problem.

The police force and other institutions should take this issue seriously. There should be greater awareness of women's rights and peace and security. This should be brought to the attention of the government and should be made legal. The Afghan government has the responsibility to address this problem and civil society should also promote awareness.

She stated that the violations of women's human rights in the last three decades were due to war and insecurity. As an example she pointed to the fact that sexual violence, trafficking and suicide (self-immolation) still affect Afghan women. The Minister said that women should benefit from their individual and social rights just as men do. Although previous Afghan constitutions have always included gender equality, harmful traditional culture limits the freedom of women. She reiterated that it is because of these harmful traditions that women have been deprived of education for centuries. Such traditions she said have no link with Islam.

#### **Habiba Sarabi – Minister of Women's Affairs**

The Minister told participants that both men and women need peace and security. If there is no security, girls cannot go to school, as families do not allow them to. Despite this however, Afghan women voted in the 2004 elections. They had the courage to go to the ballot. The Minister said that there are very well-educated, prominent women in Afghanistan and that she wants all of these women to ask the government to include them in the cabinet. She reiterated that there are many difficult problems that need time to be solved and exhorted women to fight for peace and security.

Minister Sarabi said that women are deprived of their rights and are the disadvantaged in Afghan society. Only security can strengthen their social participation because without this they cannot participate effectively in social and political affairs. Afghans should collectively raise their voices for rapid disarmament in order to increase women's security. Additionally, women should play an effective role in the decision-making processes of Afghanistan. They should be enabled to make their own decisions on how to achieve their social and political goals.

#### **Nafisa Sultani - Head of the Disabled Women's Organisation**

Nafisa said that in almost three decades of war in Afghanistan, bomb blasts and rocket attacks have left many women disabled and widowed. These women need assistance but nobody has as yet taken any action to help. She pleaded with the Ministry of Women's Affairs to assist disabled and widowed women to restore their lives so that they do not become beggars. She suggested that the Ministry of Women's Affairs raise these problems in the cabinet meeting and also suggested that the representatives of disabled and widowed women be included in the parliament.

#### **Pashtoon Shahna, representative of Badakhshan Women**

Pashtoon Shahna told participants that widowed and elderly women live in miserable conditions and poverty. During the war in Afghanistan, thousands of women not only lost their husbands but also suffered due to poor living conditions. She said that women are generally victims of violence, gender prejudice, poverty and disease. Some diseases such as tuberculosis are very common and the mortality rate of women giving birth is very high, due to the lack of adequate medical services.

**Dr Akram Khpalwak, Gardez (Youth representative)**

Dr Khpalwak said that attention is mainly focused on Kabul but that conducting seminars and workshops only in Kabul is not enough to solve the problems of women. The women in the provinces and rural areas should not be ignored. The first step in solving women's problems is to recognise the causes of violence against them. Without first identifying the causes, Afghans cannot take action. Afghanistan is a traditional culture and society and at times these are stronger than the laws. In such a society, care must be taken.

Despite the fact that the rights of men have been well explained in the holy Koran and in the Afghan constitution, in many cases issues relating to women are resolved traditionally. He said that action must be taken to reform harmful traditions so that constitutional law governs the life of women.

**Maria Sazawar, Mazar-i-Sharif (Representative from the North)**

Women writers, columnists and artistes are under threat from armed men, for example last year two women were killed by their husbands in one of the provinces. Unfortunately, no one has as yet held an inquiry into these cases. Maria said that women are participating in some processes but are still not fully free to do so. For example, many women participated with much enthusiasm in the 2004 election processes but there are some who were threatened by their husbands and other family members for participating.

**Hulan Katibi, Herat (Representative from the West)**

Both men and women have a low level of awareness of the issues. Men should participate in awareness-raising so that they can support women's inclusion in all sectors of society. The role of women in political parties has been symbolic and they do not have decision-making power. Additionally, women are admitted to membership of organisations as a symbolic gesture of recognition of their important role in peace and security processes.

The rate of forced marriages and of divorce's continues to increase in many places. Additionally, many cases of suicide (self-immolation) among returnees currently occur in Herat province. Many young Afghan refugee women have returned to Afghanistan from Iran and because of the separation from their families, and the lack of proper living conditions, they are at risk of becoming victims of sexual predators. For these returnees there are no living facilities and social services. They all suffer from homelessness, unemployment, poverty and misery. Another problem is that not only do men commit violence against women – but that women as well create problems for each other by being unsupportive. For example, women wanted to set up a sports centre but could not because other women vetoed the idea.

## Appendix II: Gender and Peace Building Programme Background

The Gender and Peacebuilding Programme has evolved out of the global campaign *Women Building Peace: From the Village Council to the Negotiating Table*, launched in May 1999 by International Alert with the support of over 200 partners (see [www.womenbuildingpeace.org](http://www.womenbuildingpeace.org)). Operating at the global, regional, national and local levels, the campaign aimed to influence the policies and practices of global policymakers, particularly the United Nations Security Council, to encourage them to put women firmly on their agenda and to be more responsive to women's perspectives and their positive role in peacebuilding.

The main focus of the campaign was to secure the adoption of a UN Security Council resolution on women, peace and security, and to raise women's profile. Following the successful and unanimous adoption of UNSC Resolution 1325 on October 31, 2000, the campaign has transformed itself into the Gender and Peacebuilding Programme. The programme takes resolution 1325 as its framework for synergistic activities to promote gender-sensitive and gender-aware policies rooted in local realities.

The two interlinked and interdependent projects are:

- The Gender Peace Audit Project, which works at the local, national and regional levels
- The Global Policy Advocacy Project, which focuses on the interface with the international policy level.

**The Afghanistan national consultation forms part of the Gender Peace Audit project, which focuses on three interlinked yet distinct components:**

- Consultations with women (and some men) to inform them of resolution 1325 and to engage in a dialogue on how the resolution can be used as an advocacy tool to address issues affecting their peace and security. The consultations also provide a safe space where women can share their experiences of conflict and peacebuilding, and develop recommendations for gender responsive implementation of the resolution that can be shared with policy makers at all levels.
- Systematic documentation of women's peacebuilding knowledge and the development of indicators for monitoring the impact of their peacebuilding activities
- Development of a compendium of tools for awareness raising and advocacy

Participants have identified Alert's role as a facilitating organisation as key in the dissemination of the results from the consultations in order to promote a more cohesive policy to practice linkage. Thus, issues and themes resulting from the consultations and other components of the Gender Peace Audit Project are disseminated through the work of the Global Policy Advocacy Project to international and regional policy makers, parliamentarians, civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders in order to promote the gender-aware development and gender-sensitive implementation of policies and programmes affecting women's peace and security. Several reports have been produced and are available on the website [www.womenbuildingpeace.org](http://www.womenbuildingpeace.org) and on request from Alert's Gender and Peacebuilding Programme. (molson@international-alert.org).

### **Global Policy Advocacy Project**

The Global Policy activities aim to influence and shape global policies affecting women's peace and security through integrating an informed gender perspective into policies and practice.

Current focus – crosscutting policy and practice research areas:

- Gender and peace support operations
- Gender and conflict early warning
- Gender and post-conflict reconstruction
- Gender and disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration

The Gender and Peacebuilding programme engages in unilateral and coalition based:

- Policy research
- Policy dialogue and advocacy;
- Consultation and communication
- Awareness-raising and resource-sharing

These practices are engaged with key targets, primarily the United Nations (Security Council, OCHA, UNDP, DDA, DPKO, DPA, DAW, UNIFEM and Member State missions to both the UN and the European Union (EU Council and Parliament)).

The Global Policy work builds on the results/outputs/experiences resulting from the Gender Peace Audit activities in conflict and post-conflict contexts

## Appendix III: About ACSF

### History

The Afghan Civil Society Forum was developed as a partnership between Afghan civil society actors and swisspeace at the request of 76 participants of the first Afghan Civil Society Conference in Bad Honnef, Germany (29 November - 2 December 2001). This conference was facilitated by swisspeace parallel to the meeting of political representatives organised by the UN at Petersberg near Bonn. The goal of the conference was to involve Afghan civil society in the peace and reconstruction process of their country in order to achieve a more sustainable post-conflict reconstruction than a simple top-down approach. The Afghan Civil Society Forum began its activities at the beginning of February 2002 after initial funds from the Swiss and German government were secured. The ACSF Office in Kabul was opened two months later in May 2002.

### Vision and Mission

The Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF) envisions a democracy supported by informed, committed and active citizens who continue to participate in the development of a just and equitable society based on the rule of law, respect for human rights and fundamental freedom in Afghanistan. Its mission is to encourage Afghan citizens to participate in the social and political development of Afghanistan. ACSF aims to promote civil society in the interest of helping establish a just and accountable society by initiating and facilitating dialogue, networking, and information sharing.

### Objectives and Core Activities

The overarching goal of ACSF is to promote the development of civil society in Afghanistan. Its detailed objectives are:

- to increase the involvement of all sectors and levels of Afghan society in the reconstruction, development and peace process of Afghanistan
- to enable civil society to have a voice on important issues
- to strengthen the networking of civil society

The salient idea is to enhance collective action of civil society actors and thus ensure a voice and a role in the future of Afghanistan, politically, nationally, internationally and with the humanitarian aid community by the following core activities:

### Publications

- Jamea-e-Madani (Civil Society) Magazine in Dari and Pashto
- ACSF Newsletter in English, Civil Society information and news in Afghanistan

### Civic Education

- Curriculum Development and Strategy implementation
- Afghanistan-wide network of skilled civic educators in all provinces

### Conference Management

- Development/implementation of target-group or topic-specific workshops and dialogue sessions relevant to Civil Society
- Facilitation – Ability to provide skilled facilitators across the country
- Logistics – Ability to organise all aspects of conferences, workshops, or dialogue sessions

### Consultation

- Ability to carry out nation-wide consultations at the grass roots and analyse/assess public opinion

### Advocacy

- Ability to monitor and advocate on peoples' rights and responsibilities in the socio-political context

### Network Establishment and Management

- Facilitate networking, coordination, and communication among various stakeholders (both nationally and internationally)

### Organisational Development

- Capacity building – advice and guidance to new or emerging civil society organisations



Participants to the workshop discussing Resolution 1325  
Photo by Kakar, formerly of ACSF, December 2004 © International Alert, 2005

## Appendix IV: Women, Peace and Security Agenda

### Day One - Tuesday 30 Nov 2004

08:00 – 08:30 Arrival of participants and Registration

08:30 – 10:00 Welcome note and speeches

**Facilitator:** **Partaw Naderi (ACSF)**

- Recitation from the holy Koran
- Her Excellency, Minister of Woman's Affairs, Sarabi
- Her Excellency, State Minister for Woman Affairs, Hoqooqmal
- General Helal, Professional Deputy, Ministry of Interior
- Sima Samar, Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission
- Manavi, High Court Judge
- Mahmood Daqiq, Attorney General
- Prof. Kazim Ahahng
- Miss Nafisa Sultani, Afghan Disabled Union

10:00 – 10:15 Tea Break

10:15 – 10:45 Introductions to the Consultation & Participants

**Facilitator:** **Aziz Rafiee (ACSF)**

- Overview of Workshop Objectives and Agenda
- Sharing relevant information
- Guiding Principles for the Workshop

10:45 – 11:15 Expectations and Concerns

**Facilitator:** **Asila Wardak (Aziz Rafiee)**

11:15 – 12:30 The Afghanistan conflict context

**Facilitator:** **Shiela Samimi**

- Presentations by selected Afghan participants
- Perspectives and Experiences of the Afghan Conflict
- Pashtoon Shana, Badakhshan, on Widows
- Fahim Hakim, AIHRC, on Human Rights
- Jamila Afghani, Rights and Democracy, on Widows
- Akram Khapalwak, on Youth
- Maria Sazawar, Balkh, on General issues
- Hulan Khatibi, Herat, Refugees/Internally Displaced People

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch and Prayer

13:30 – 15:00 Working Groups

**Facilitators:** Asila Wardak, Shiela Samimi, Marzia Meena

- How do women define security in their different contexts in Afghanistan?
- What are the issues affecting women's peace and security?
- How do Afghans define the peace and security context?

15:00 – 15:30 Group Presentations

15:30 – 16:30 Working Groups

**Facilitators:** Asila Wardak, Shiela Samimi and Marzia Meena

- What activities do women engage in to address these issues?

16:30 – 17:00 Presentation, Feedback and discussion

19:00 Dinner

**Day Two - Wednesday 01 Dec 2004**

08:00 – 08:15 Introduction to the day/Housekeeping issues

**Facilitator:** Asila Wardak (Malalai)

08:15 – 09:00 International Instruments signed by Afghanistan

**Facilitator:** Shiela Samimi

09:00 – 10:30 Introducing and unpacking Resolution 1325

**Facilitator:** Ancil Adrian-Paul, International Alert

10:30 – 10:45 Tea Break

10:45 – 12:30 Working Groups

- Linking 1325 to peace and security issues in Afghanistan

**Facilitators:** Asila Wardak, Shiela Samimi, Marzia Meena

- How do the women identify with the issues reflected in the resolution identify the issues? Are there any gaps?
- Recommendations to policy makers

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch and Prayer

13:30 – 15:00 Working Groups

- Good aspects of traditions and practices in Afghanistan

**Facilitators:** Asila Wardak, Shiela Samimi, Marzia Meena

- What are the key constraining challenges?
- How could these be addressed?
- How to change/use the environment?

15:30 - 15:45	Tea break
15:45 – 16:30	Presentation, feedback and conclusion of the day
17:00	Dinner at Marco Polo Restaurant
<b>Day Three - Thursday 02 Dec 2004</b>	
08:30 – 8:45	Introduction to the day/Housekeeping issues
<b>Facilitator:</b> 08:45 - 10:15	<b>Asila Wardak (Malalai)</b> Working Groups
<b>Facilitators:</b>	<b>Asila Wardak, Shiela Samimi, Marzia Meena</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the key reconstruction processes in which women need to be involved?</li> </ul>
10:15 – 10:30	Presentation
10:30 – 10:45	Tea break
10:45 – 12:00	Working Groups
<b>Facilitators:</b>	<b>Asila Wardak, Shiela Samimi, Marzia Meena</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developing strategies to promote women’s role in post-conflict reconstruction</li> <li>• What strategies can women use to promote their inclusion in the post-conflict reconstruction process?</li> </ul>
12:00 – 12:30	Presentation
12:30 – 13:30	Lunch and Prayer
13:30 – 15:30	Action Plan for follow-up
<b>Facilitator:</b> 15:30 – 15:45	<b>Aziz Rafiee (Asila Wardak, Shiela Samimi and Marzia Meena)</b> Tea Break
15:45 – 16:15	Feedback and discussion
16:15 – 16:30	General Evaluation/Feedback (flash cards and evaluation forms)
16:30 – 17:00	Statement, thanks & close of consultation
18:00	Dinner and poetry at ACSF

## Appendix V: List of Participants

#	Name	Gender	Organisation	Province	Contact Address
1	M. Sharif	M	Cooperation for Peace and Unity	Badakhshan	
2	Pashtoon Shahna	F	Cooperation for Peace and Unity	Badakhshan	
3	Maria Sazawar	F	Bedar Magazine	Balkh	070-511062
4	Robaba Naibi	F	Education Ministry	Balkh	070-517708
5	Latifa Sultani	F	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	Bamian	079-409550
6	Asghar Shekoh	M	Bamian Youth Development Program	Bamyan	079-131473 shekoh_asghar@yahoo.com
7	Dr. M. Akram Khapalwak	M	Afghan Youth Society	Gardez	070 27 97 54
8	Arefa Maddadi	F	Ghazni Governor's Office	Ghazni	079-209391
9	Fahima	F	Ghazni Governor's Office	Ghazni	070-228895
10	Hulan Khatibi	F	Women's Activities and Social Services Association	Herat	079-407660 wassa2010@hotmail.com
11	Sulaiman Haqpannah	M	UNIFEM	Herat	079-209709
12	Suraya Pakzad	F	VWO	Herat	079-209386
13	Adela Kawusi	F	Anis Dially	Kabul	070-235652
14	Adela Mohsini	F	National Democratic Institute	Kabul	
15	Alia Hafizee	F	Zarghona High School	Kabul	020-2301135
16	Fatema Aryan	F	The Asia Foundation	Kabul	079-400115 fatema@ag.asiafound.af
17	Faud Massiha	M	GMA	Kabul	079-200782
18	Gul Madadzai	M	Ministry of Interior Affairs	Kabul	
19	Habiba Sarabi	F	Ministry of Women Affairs	Kabul	
20	Jamila Afghani	F	Rights and Democracy	Kabul	079-337667
21	M. Mansoor	M	BBC-AEP	Kabul	nassimy50@hotmail.com
22	M. Nawab Noorzad	M	Tolo TV	Kabul	079-181913
23	M. S Azim	M	Kabul University	Kabul	020-250040
24	Mahbooba Hoqooqmal	F	State Ministry	Kabul	
25	Malika Ani	F	ECW	Kabul	079-323304
26	Mina Ahmadzai	F	AWRC	Kabul	070-054360
27	Mustafa Salik	M	BBC	Kabul	020-2300088
28	Nafisa Kabuli	F	WCLRF	Kabul	070-2544810
29	Nooria	F	Rokhshana High School	Kabul	070-234520
30	Nooria Haqnegar	F	Ministry of Women Affairs	Kabul	070-298983
31	Rahila Babak	F	AIL	Kabul	070-284326
32	Raihana Popalzai	F	Kabul University	Kabul	070-281775 popalzai@hotmail.com

33	Roshan Sirran	F	THRA	Kabul	070-286744
34	Shamila Jawed	F	Radio Liberty	Kabul	070-227384
35	Suraya	F	Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission	Kabul	079-285534
36	Zainab	F	IWPR	Kabul	070-210675
37	Zakia Ibrahimi	F	AIL	Kabul	070-284326
38	Anisa	F	Rabia Balkhi High School	Kabul	070-228895
39	Gul Rahman Qazi		Kabul University	Kabul	
40	Suhaila Kabir	F	Kabul Times	Kabul	070-232861
41	Farida Malikzida	F	Fatima-tu-Zahra High School	Kunduz	079-423088
42	Shapirai Kundz	F	Fatima-tu-Zahra High School	Kunduz	079-368011
43	M. Amin	M	AREA Jalalabad	Nangarhar	070-620578
44	Ziba Jabbarkhel	F	AREA Jalalabad	Nangarhar	070-620578
45	Sayed Bebe	F	Ministry of Women Affairs	Nooristan	079-355347
46	Shajan	F	Women Affairs Ministry	Parwan	070-214151

## Appendix VI: Evaluation

Participants made the following comments as a part of their verbal and written feedback.

1. Afghanistan is obliged to implement this resolution as it is a member of the United Nations and has adhered to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. So, people should be made aware of the contents of this resolution.
2. Every year a workshop such as this should be conducted and some of the participants of this workshop should also be invited to report their activities and progress. In future workshops progress related to the rights of women should be evaluated and civil society should streamline and develop its activities.
3. This workshop provided opportunity for men and women to come together from different provinces to share their problems in line with resolution 1325 and find out the solutions. Furthermore, the workshop helped us to gain information about other treaties and agreements mentioned in resolution 1325.
4. Awareness of resolution 1325 was one of the valuable parts of this workshop.
5. The explanation of CEDAW is unforgettable learning for us.
6. The problems relating to women expressed in this workshop encouraged us to take serious steps to implement this resolution and we will require the assistance of the government. We discussed the challenges and problems related to the resolution and identified the solutions.
7. The information regarding resolution 1325 and finding ways for women's participation in the peace process were very useful and important to us.
8. In this workshop we received information about other resolutions of the United Nations.
9. In this workshop we learned that women are in more need of unity and solidarity to overcome the problems. The information we gained in regards to the resolution 1325 was very useful.
10. We found out that the international community has been working on the rights of women and are trying their best to implement resolution 1325 in a practical and context specific manner.
11. We learned about the political struggle of women at the global level from resolution 1325 and CEDAW.
12. We learned that the international community is focusing on women rights more than before.
13. We learned that men and women in Afghanistan should work together in unity to solve the problems.
14. We made new friends in this workshop.
15. We gained information about the life of vulnerable women of the world and Afghanistan.

## Appendix VII: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women

### *The States Parties to the present Convention,*

**Noting** that the Charter of the United Nations reaffirms faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women,

**Noting** that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms the principle of the inadmissibility of discrimination and proclaims that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth therein, without distinction of any kind, including distinction based on sex.

**Noting** that the States Parties to the International Covenants on Human Rights have the obligation to ensure the equal rights of men and women to enjoy all economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights.

**Considering** the international conventions concluded under the auspices of the United Nations and the specialized agencies promoting equality of rights of men and women.

**Noting** also the resolutions, declarations and recommendations adopted by the United Nations and the specialized agencies promoting equality of rights of men and women.

Concerned, however, that despite these various instruments extensive discrimination against women continues to exist.

**Recalling** that discrimination against women violates the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, is an obstacle to the participation of women, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries, hampers the growth of the prosperity of society and the family and makes more difficult the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity.

**Concerned** that in situations of poverty women have the least access to food, health, education, training and opportunities for employment and other needs.

**Convinced** that the establishment of the new international economic order based on equity and justice will contribute significantly towards the promotion of equality between men and women.

**Emphasizing** that the eradication of apartheid, all forms of racism, racial discrimination, colonialism, neo-colonialism, aggression, foreign occupation and domination and interference in the internal affairs of States is essential to the full enjoyment of the rights of men and women.

**Affirming** that the strengthening of international peace and security, the relaxation of international tension, mutual co-operation among all States irrespective of their social and economic systems, general and complete disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control, the affirmation of the principles of justice, equality and mutual benefit in relations among countries and the realization of the right of peoples under alien and colonial domination and foreign occupation to self-determination and independence, as well as respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, will promote social progress and development and as a consequence will contribute to the attainment of full equality between men and women, Convinced that the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields.

**Bearing** in mind the great contribution of women to the welfare of the family and to the development of society, so far not fully recognized, the social significance of maternity and the role of both parents in the family and in the upbringing of children, and aware that the role of women in procreation should not be a basis for discrimination but that the upbringing of children requires a sharing of responsibility between men and women and society as a whole.

**Aware** that a change in the traditional role of men as well as the role of women in society and in the family is needed to achieve full equality between men and women, Determined to implement the principles set forth in the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and, for that purpose, to adopt the measures required for the elimination of such discrimination in all its forms and manifestations.

Have agreed on the following:

## **PART I**

### **Article 1**

For the purposes of the present Convention, the term “discrimination against women” shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

### **Article 2**

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

- (a) To embody the principle of the equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realization of this principle;
- (b) To adopt appropriate legislative and other measures, including sanctions where appropriate, prohibiting all discrimination against women;
- (c) To establish legal protection of the rights of women on an equal basis with men and to ensure through competent national tribunals and other public institutions the effective protection of women against any act of discrimination;
- (d) To refrain from engaging in any act or practice of discrimination against women and to ensure that public authorities and institutions shall act in conformity with this obligation;
- (e) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women by any person, organization or enterprise;
- (f) To take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to modify or abolish existing laws, regulations, customs and practices which constitute discrimination against women;
- (g) To repeal all national penal provisions which constitute discrimination against women.

### **Article 3**

States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.

### **Article 4**

1. Adoption by States Parties of temporary special measures aimed at accelerating de facto equality between men and women shall not be considered discrimination as

defined in the present Convention, but shall in no way entail as a consequence the maintenance of unequal or separate standards; these measures shall be discontinued when the objectives of equality of opportunity and treatment have been achieved.

2. Adoption by States Parties of special measures, including those measures contained in the present Convention, aimed at protecting maternity shall not be considered discriminatory.

#### **Article 5**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures:

- (a) To modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;
- (b) To ensure that family education includes a proper understanding of maternity as a social function and the recognition of the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing and development of their children, it being understood that the interest of the children is the primordial consideration in all cases.

#### **Article 6**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislation, to suppress all forms of traffic in women and exploitation of prostitution of women.

## **PART II**

#### **Article 7**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country and, in particular, shall ensure to women, on equal terms with men, the right:

- (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies;
- (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government;
- (c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.

#### **Article 8**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to ensure to women, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the opportunity to represent their Governments at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

#### **Article 9**

1. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men to acquire, change or retain their nationality. They shall ensure in particular that neither marriage to an alien nor change of nationality by the husband during marriage shall automatically change the nationality of the wife, render her stateless or force upon her the nationality of the husband.
2. States Parties shall grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

## **PART III**

#### **Article 10**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

- (a) The same conditions for career and vocational guidance, for access to studies and for the achievement of diplomas in educational establishments of all categories in rural as well as in urban areas; this equality shall be ensured in pre-school, general, technical, professional and higher technical education, as well as in all types of vocational training;
- (b) Access to the same curricula, the same examinations, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and school premises and equipment of the same quality;
- (c) The elimination of any stereotyped concept of the roles of men and women at all levels and in all forms of education by encouraging coeducation and other types of education which will help to achieve this aim and, in particular, by the revision of textbooks and school programmes and the adaptation of teaching methods;
- (d) The same opportunities to benefit from scholarships and other study grants;
- (e) The same opportunities for access to programmes of continuing education, including adult and functional literacy programmes, particularly those aimed at reducing, at the earliest possible time, any gap in education existing between men and women;
- (f) The reduction of female student drop-out rates and the organization of programmes for girls and women who have left school prematurely;
- (g) The same Opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;
- (h) Access to specific educational information to help to ensure the health and well-being of families, including information and advice on family planning.

#### **Article 11**

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of employment in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:
  - (a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings;
  - (b) The right to the same employment opportunities, including the application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment;
  - (c) The right to free choice of profession and employment, the right to promotion, job security and all benefits and conditions of service and the right to receive vocational training and retraining, including apprenticeships, advanced vocational training and recurrent training;
  - (d) The right to equal remuneration, including benefits, and to equal treatment in respect of work of equal value, as well as equality of treatment in the evaluation of the quality of work;
  - (e) The right to social security, particularly in cases of retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old age and other incapacity to work, as well as the right to paid leave;
  - (f) The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction.
2. In order to prevent discrimination against women on the grounds of marriage or maternity and to ensure their effective right to work, States Parties shall take appropriate measures:
  - (a) To prohibit, subject to the imposition of sanctions, dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy or of maternity leave and discrimination in dismissals on the basis of marital status;
  - (b) To introduce maternity leave with pay or with comparable social benefits without loss of former employment, seniority or social allowances;
  - (c) To encourage the provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities and participation in public life, in particular through promoting the establishment and development of a network of child-care facilities;
  - (d) To provide special protection to women during pregnancy in types of work proved to be harmful to them.

3. Protective legislation relating to matters covered in this article shall be reviewed periodically in the light of scientific and technological knowledge and shall be revised, repealed or extended as necessary.

**Article 12**

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of health care in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, access to health care services, including those related to family planning.
2. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 1 of this article, States Parties shall ensure to women appropriate services in connection with pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period, granting free services where necessary, as well as adequate nutrition during pregnancy and lactation.

**Article 13**

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

- (a) The right to family benefits;
- (b) The right to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit;
- (c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.

**Article 14**

1. States Parties shall take into account the particular problems faced by rural women and the significant roles which rural women play in the economic survival of their families, including their work in the non-monetized sectors of the economy, and shall take all appropriate measures to ensure the application of the provisions of the present Convention to women in rural areas.
2. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in rural areas in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, that they participate in and benefit from rural development and, in particular, shall ensure to such women the right:
  - (a) To participate in the elaboration and implementation of development planning at all levels;
  - (b) To have access to adequate health care facilities, including information, counselling and services in family planning;
  - (c) To benefit directly from social security programmes;
  - (d) To obtain all types of training and education, formal and non-formal, including that relating to functional literacy, as well as, inter alia, the benefit of all community and extension services, in order to increase their technical proficiency;
  - (e) To organize self-help groups and co-operatives in order to obtain equal access to economic opportunities through employment or self employment;
  - (f) To participate in all community activities;
  - (g) To have access to agricultural credit and loans, marketing facilities, appropriate technology and equal treatment in land and agrarian reform as well as in land resettlement schemes;
  - (h) To enjoy adequate living conditions, particularly in relation to housing, sanitation, electricity and water supply, transport and communications.

## PART IV

### *Article 15*

1. States Parties shall accord to women equality with men before the law.
2. States Parties shall accord to women, in civil matters, a legal capacity identical to that of men and the same opportunities to exercise that capacity. In particular, they shall give women equal rights to conclude contracts and to administer property and shall treat them equally in all stages of procedure in courts and tribunals.
3. States Parties agree that all contracts and all other private instruments of any kind with a legal effect which is directed at restricting the legal capacity of women shall be deemed null and void.
4. States Parties shall accord to men and women the same rights with regard to the law relating to the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence and domicile.

### *Article 16*

1. States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in all matters relating to marriage and family relations and in particular shall ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:
  - (a) The same right to enter into marriage;
  - (b) The same right freely to choose a spouse and to enter into marriage only with their free and full consent;
  - (c) The same rights and responsibilities during marriage and at its dissolution;
  - (d) The same rights and responsibilities as parents, irrespective of their marital status, in matters relating to their children; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;
  - (e) The same rights to decide freely and responsibly on the number and spacing of their children and to have access to the information, education and means to enable them to exercise these rights;
  - (f) The same rights and responsibilities with regard to guardianship, wardship, trusteeship and adoption of children, or similar institutions where these concepts exist in national legislation; in all cases the interests of the children shall be paramount;
  - (g) The same personal rights as husband and wife, including the right to choose a family name, a profession and an occupation;
  - (h) The same rights for both spouses in respect of the ownership, acquisition, management, administration, enjoyment and disposition of property, whether free of charge or for a valuable consideration.
2. The betrothal and the marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, and all necessary action, including legislation, shall be taken to specify a minimum age for marriage and to make the registration of marriages in an official registry compulsory.

## PART V

### *Article 17*

1. For the purpose of considering the progress made in the implementation of the present Convention, there shall be established a **Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women** (hereinafter referred to as the Committee) consisting, at the time of entry into force of the Convention, of eighteen and, after ratification of or accession to the Convention by the thirty-fifth State Party, of twenty-three experts of high moral standing and competence in the field covered by the Convention. The experts shall be elected by States Parties from among their nationals and shall serve in their

personal capacity, consideration being given to equitable geographical distribution and to the representation of the different forms of civilization as well as the principal legal systems.

2. The members of the Committee shall be elected by secret ballot from a list of persons nominated by States Parties. Each State Party may nominate one person from among its own nationals.
3. The initial election shall be held six months after the date of the entry into force of the present Convention. At least three months before the date of each election the Secretary-General of the United Nations shall address a letter to the States Parties inviting them to submit their nominations within two months. The Secretary-General shall prepare a list in alphabetical order of all persons thus nominated, indicating the States Parties which have nominated them, and shall submit it to the States Parties.
4. Elections of the members of the Committee shall be held at a meeting of States Parties convened by the Secretary-General at United Nations Headquarters. At that meeting, for which two thirds of the States Parties shall constitute a quorum, the persons elected to the Committee shall be those nominees who obtain the largest number of votes and an absolute majority of the votes of the representatives of States Parties present and voting.
5. The members of the Committee shall be elected for a term of four years. However, the terms of nine of the members elected at the first election shall expire at the end of two years; immediately after the first election the names of these nine members shall be chosen by lot by the Chairman of the Committee.
6. The election of the five additional members of the Committee shall be held in accordance with the provisions of paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of this article, following the thirty-fifth ratification or accession. The terms of two of the additional members elected on this occasion shall expire at the end of two years, the names of these two members having been chosen by lot by the Chairman of the Committee.
7. For the filling of casual vacancies, the State Party whose expert has ceased to function as a member of the Committee shall appoint another expert from among its nationals, subject to the approval of the Committee.
8. The members of the Committee shall, with the approval of the General Assembly, receive emoluments from United Nations resources on such terms and conditions as the Assembly may decide, having regard to the importance of the Committee's responsibilities.
9. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the necessary staff and facilities for the effective performance of the functions of the Committee under the present Convention.

#### **Article 18**

1. States Parties undertake to submit to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for consideration by the Committee, a report on the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures which they have adopted to give effect to the provisions of the present Convention and on the progress made in this respect:
  - (a) Within one year after the entry into force for the State concerned;
  - (b) Thereafter at least every four years and further whenever the Committee so requests.
2. Reports may indicate factors and difficulties affecting the degree of fulfilment of obligations under the present Convention.

#### **Article 19**

1. The Committee shall adopt its own rules of procedure.
2. The Committee shall elect its officers for a term of two years.

**Article 20**

1. The Committee shall normally meet for a period of not more than two weeks annually in order to consider the reports submitted in accordance with article 18 of the present Convention.
2. The meetings of the Committee shall normally be held at United Nations Headquarters or at any other convenient place as determined by the Committee. **(amendment, status of ratification)**

**Article 21**

1. The Committee shall, through the Economic and Social Council, report annually to the General Assembly of the United Nations on its activities and may make suggestions and general recommendations based on the examination of reports and information received from the States Parties. Such suggestions and general recommendations shall be included in the report of the Committee together with comments, if any, from States Parties.
2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall transmit the reports of the Committee to the Commission on the Status of Women for its information.

**Article 22**

The specialized agencies shall be entitled to be represented at the consideration of the implementation of such provisions of the present Convention as fall within the scope of their activities. The Committee may invite the specialized agencies to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities.

**PART VI****Article 23**

Nothing in the present Convention shall affect any provisions that are more conducive to the achievement of equality between men and women which may be contained:

- (a) In the legislation of a State Party; or
- (b) In any other international convention, treaty or agreement in force for that State.

**Article 24**

States Parties undertake to adopt all necessary measures at the national level aimed at achieving the full realization of the rights recognized in the present Convention.

**Article 25**

1. The present Convention shall be open for signature by all States.
2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations is designated as the depositary of the present Convention.
3. The present Convention is subject to ratification. Instruments of ratification shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.
4. The present Convention shall be open to accession by all States. Accession shall be effected by the deposit of an instrument of accession with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

**Article 26**

1. A request for the revision of the present Convention may be made at any time by any State Party by means of a notification in writing addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.
2. The General Assembly of the United Nations shall decide upon the steps, if any, to be taken in respect of such a request.

**Article 27**

1. The present Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of deposit with the Secretary-General of the United Nations of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession.
2. For each State ratifying the present Convention or acceding to it after the deposit of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession, the Convention shall enter into force on the thirtieth day after the date of the deposit of its own instrument of ratification or accession.

**Article 28**

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall receive and circulate to all States the text of reservations made by States at the time of ratification or accession.
2. A reservation incompatible with the object and purpose of the present Convention shall not be permitted.
3. Reservations may be withdrawn at any time by notification to this effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall then inform all States thereof. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received.

**Article 29**

1. Any dispute between two or more States Parties concerning the interpretation or application of the present Convention which is not settled by negotiation shall, at the request of one of them, be submitted to arbitration. If within six months from the date of the request for arbitration the parties are unable to agree on the organization of the arbitration, any one of those parties may refer the dispute to the International Court of Justice by request in conformity with the Statute of the Court.
2. Each State Party may at the time of signature or ratification of the present Convention or accession thereto declare that it does not consider itself bound by paragraph 1 of this article. The other States Parties shall not be bound by that paragraph with respect to any State Party which has made such a reservation.
3. Any State Party which has made a reservation in accordance with paragraph 2 of this article may at any time withdraw that reservation by notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

**Article 30**

The present Convention, the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts of which are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

## Appendix VIII: United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (October 2000)

The Security Council,

**Recalling** its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President and recalling also the statement of its President, to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

**Recalling** also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the twenty-first century" (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

**Bearing** in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

**Expressing** concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

**Reaffirming** the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

**Reaffirming** also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

**Emphasizing** the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

**Recognizing** the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

**Recognizing** also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

**Recognizing** that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security,

**Noting** the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,  
1. **Urges** Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict;

2. **Encourages** the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;
3. **Urges** the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls on Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster;
4. **Further** urges the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;
5. **Expresses** its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;
6. **Requests** the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peace-building measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;
7. **Urges** Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;
8. **Calls** on all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia: (a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction; (b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements; (c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;
9. **Calls** upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the Refugee Convention of 1951 and the Protocol thereto of 1967, the Convention Security Council - 5 - Press Release SC/6942 4213th Meeting (PM) 31 October 2000 on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 1999 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;
10. **Calls** on all parties to armed conflict to take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict;
11. **Emphasizes** the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes including those

relating to sexual violence against women and girls, and in this regard, stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible from amnesty provisions;

12. ***Calls*** upon all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolution 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998;
13. ***Encourages*** all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;
14. ***Reaffirms*** its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;
15. ***Expresses*** its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;
16. ***Invites*** the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;
17. ***Requests*** the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council, progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;
18. ***Decides*** to remain actively seized of the matter.”





**Afghan Civil Society Forum (ACSF)**, Shahr Ara watt, H# 45, Across Malalai Maternity Hospital, Shahr Naw Kabul, Afghanistan  
Tel: +93 (0) 202201061, Cell: +93 (0) 79234479, E-Mail: [acsf-kabul@swisspeace.ch](mailto:acsf-kabul@swisspeace.ch)  
[www.acsf.org.af](http://www.acsf.org.af)

**International Alert (IA)**, 346 Clapham Road, London SW9 9AP, United Kingdom  
Tel: + 44 20 7627 6800, Fax:+ 44 20 7627 6900, E-mail: [molson@international-alert.org](mailto:molson@international-alert.org)  
[www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org)

ISBN: 1-898702-68-3