



Women in Conflict Zones and Situations
Resolution IVth EWA CONGRESS¹, adopted at 8 October 2010, The Hague

The IVth EWA Congress,

Taking into consideration, that the European Union creates unique possibilities when it comes to peace building operations and that countries inside and outside the union in our globalized world have become mutually dependent on each other,

Noting, that around the world, men are generally the ones in leading positions and thereby also the ones responsible for planning and carrying out conflicts, and that they are also the ones mainly active in wars,

Noting too, that in many countries women have been used as targets for mutilation, rape and killings, and that these conflict and war related forms of violence against women are cruel and inhumane ways of psychologically annihilating communities, and that the perpetrators of those crimes are rarely charged and tried before a court of law,

Further noting, that everyday tasks in war zones rest almost entirely on women and children, and that, in consequence, women's experience of a conflict has different perspectives from men's, enabling them to point at specific requirements for peace and what is needed for building up society after a conflict,

Noting that women constitute the majority of the population when a long-lasting war or conflict comes to an end and that, in spite of this, women are almost always excluded from the decision-making processes and peace negotiations; and *realizing* that evidence points out that lasting peace can only be achieved if the needs, priorities and strategies of both women and men are taken into account,

Noting that today only 21 national governments worldwide, including nine EU Member States, are putting UN Security Council resolution 1325 (about women, peace and security) into action through the development of National Action Plans (NAPs), spelling out the steps the governments are currently taking or will undertake,

Noting too that within the UN structures a new body has been created, UN Women, promoting gender equality and empowerment of women as well as a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict dealing with the issue concerned,

Recalling UN Resolution 1325 (October 2000) about women, peace and security, which calls for the participation of women and civil society in all political decision-making that comes with a conflict,

Recalling UN Resolution 1820 (June 2008), which condemns the use of rape and other forms of sexual violence as weapons of war - these forms of violence form an obstacle of establishing peace -

¹ The EWA, European Women's Organisation, is the umbrella organisation of the European Union of Women (www.eu-woman.eu) and the EPP Women (www.epp-women.org)

and which emphasizes the importance of justice and courts of law to prosecute the perpetrators who made use of these inhumane weapons,

Recalling also the UN Millennium Development Goals, in particular MDGs on promoting the right of girls to education and MDGs on the importance of the role of women in health care and societal reconstruction,

Calls upon the European Commission:

- 1) to ensure that issues regarding women's participation, influence and decision making possibilities in post-conflict situations are an integrated part of the EU's development aid towards post-conflict / conflict countries,
- 2) to reaffirm its already existing policy that all EU's political dialogues with third countries include questions regarding women's active participation, recognition of women's rights as human rights, security and needs (health care, access to education, achievement of practical skills),

Urges the European Commission:

- 1) to implement a Gender Force project at EU-level, allowing female military and peace keeping forces to establish contact and especially protect the interest of women in conflict areas,
- 2) to extend the EU's strategic cooperation with UN, OSCE and AU within the area of peace and security and also include the 1325 and 1820 perspectives, both in concrete actions and in the establishment of all related strategies,
- 3) to establish a code of conduct and an Action Plan for the implementation of UN resolution 1325 and UN resolution 1820 within the European Security and Defence policy,

Urges the EU Member States:

- 1) to train personnel that are deployed on peace keeping missions (for example civilian police, military, peace keeping forces) in a manner in which a gender perspective is integrated in all assignments and in a way that takes into account the added value of military cooperation with civil partners, as in particular civil society organisations that are working on health care and education, on economic, social, and juridical reconstruction, and on fighting corruption,
- 2) to prevent and severely punish sexual abuse of women in the countries where military and peace keeping forces are deployed,
- 3) to develop and implement National Action Plans on UN Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in concrete, responsive, time-bound programmes, resources and evaluation mechanisms,
- 4) to increase funds for research into the role of gender in peace keeping operations,
- 5) to further improve among its populations the knowledge and understanding of the UN resolutions 1325 and 1820,

Urges the European Union

- 1) To ensure that the European External Action Service contributes to further implementation of the resolutions concerned, and functions in line with commitments on women, peace and security,

Calls on all participants involved, when negotiating and implementing peace keeping missions and programmes, in particular governments, military services, and civil society organisations:

- 1) to involve women at a decision making level in all institutions dealing with establishing peace, peace keeping processes, the composition of future treaties and good neighbouring relations,
- 2) to involve women at a decision making level in the rebuilding of a post-conflict society,
- 3) to involve women in the decision making process regarding the planning and implementation of health programmes in conflict and post-conflict countries,
- 4) to give women a key role in the planning and the establishment of refugee camps and other facilities for refugees,
- 5) to improve the security and protection of women's and girls' human rights and special needs in times of war or conflict on the basis of the women's own analysis of protection needs,
- 6) to especially take into account women's health situation in refugee camps as well as the allocation of resources,
- 7) to improve women's safety in refugee camps,
- 8) To ensure that violence against women, used as a weapon in armed conflicts, become punishable and that the local judiciary and police be trained to understand these gender based violence crimes,

- 9) to integrate a gender perspective in all work regarding conflict prevention and peace keeping initiatives and the support of women's peace initiative in conflict areas,
- 10) to integrate a gender perspective in all resolutions on armed conflicts.

Calls upon the EPP:

- 1) to engage all EPP Member Parties and its women's organisations in the development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of National Action Plans on UN Resolutions 1325 and 1820.
- 2) to directly forward this resolution to all relevant institutions in order to be used during the 10th anniversary of the UN Security Council resolution 1325 on 31 October 2010 in New York.