



Women's International League for Peace and Freedom

11th Session of the Human Rights Council

Oral Statement – 05 June 2009

- On Security Council Resolution 1820 -

Thank you Chairperson.

Almost a year ago, on the 19th of June 2008, the UN Security Council adopted a key resolution in the fight against rape in armed conflict: SCR 1820. The current and pressing question is: *Where does its implementation stand?* A question directed at all UN Member States.

Women and girls, and men and boys continue to be raped in all situations of armed conflict and their bodies are increasingly the battlegrounds. According to UNIFEM, almost half of all persons indicted by the International Criminal Court (ICC) and other international tribunals are charged with rape or sexual assault¹.

SCR 1820 focuses on this aspect and clearly:

- Establishes that sexual violence in conflict situations is a matter of the Security Council to consider and act upon². When renewing sanction regimes, specific measures can be taken against those parties who commit rape.
- Notes that sexual violence can constitute war crime, crimes against humanity and an act of genocide. In addition, 1820 “stresses the need for the exclusion of sexual violence crimes from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes”³.
- Recognizes the importance of women’s participation and reaffirms their role in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, in post-conflict peace building and in peace and security matters.

To end rape in armed conflict, a multi-dimensional and integrated response is needed from several actors. The Human Rights Council is one of these actors.

¹ UNIFEM (2009), ‘Facts and Figures on Violence Against Women’. Retrieved from: http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/facts_figures.php?page=7

² Cook, S. (2008). ‘Security Council Resolution 1820: A move to end sexual violence in conflict’. Retrieved from: http://www.peacewomen.org/un/sc/Open_Debates/Sexual_Violence08/PeaceWomenAnalysis.pdf

³ United Nations Security Council Resolution 1820 (2008). Retrieved from: <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/391/44/PDF/N0839144.pdf?OpenElement>

WILPF urges HRC Member and Observer States to:

- *Recognise* that survivors of rape are potential key agents in conflict resolution, prevention and peace building;
- *Recognise* that perpetrators include members of official armed and security forces, paramilitary groups, non-state armed groups, humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel and civilians⁴.
- *Recognise* that in countries emerging from armed conflicts impunity for rape crimes may foster an increased level of sexual violence and victimisation by sexual exploitation and trafficking⁵;
- *Work* towards removing myths in your societies which fuel sexual violence;
- *Check* and ensure that your security and armed forces do not have a record of sexual crimes before they are actively deployed;
- *Provide* gender training for all your security sector personnel in order to develop a gender-sensitive capacity within security services;
- *Honour* your obligations to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, especially in bringing rape perpetrators to justice;
- *Allocate* the necessary funds to ensure 1820 will be fully implemented. Survivors of rape crimes have to be able to receive the necessary health and social care via humanitarian and development aid;
- *Include* more more local gender expertise in field offices, refugee camps, and peace building activities⁶.
- *Remove* reservations from resolutions and treaties which are necessary in fighting rape in armed conflict;

Thank you Chairperson.

⁴ Bastick, M., Grimm, K. & Kunz, R. (2007). 'Sexual violence in armed conflict: Global overview and implications for the security sector'. Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ WILPF Resolution (2001). 'Women's experience in conflict resolution'. Retrieved from: http://www.wilpf.int.ch/resolutions/2001.htm#_Toc522003509.