
The European Parliament,

– having regard to UN Security Council Resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) on women, peace and security and UN Security Council Resolution 1888 (2009) on sexual violence against women and children in situations of armed conflict, which emphasises the responsibility of all states to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for crimes against humanity and war crimes, including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls,

– having regard to UN General Assembly resolution 54/134 of 7 February 2000, which established 25 November as the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women,

– having regard to the EU Council Plan of Action on Gender Equality in Development Cooperation, which should ensure that gender equality is mainstreamed throughout the EU’s work with partner countries at all levels,

– having regard to the appointment in March 2010 of a Special Representative to the UN Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict,

– having regard to the Council paper ‘Comprehensive Approach to the EU Implementation of UNSCR 1325 and 1820’ and the operational document on ‘the Implementation of UNSCR 1325 as reinforced by UNSCR 1820 in the context of ESDP’, both adopted in December 2008, and to the Council document on ‘Mainstreaming of Human Rights into ESDP’ of September 2006,

– having regard to the EU Guidelines on violence and discrimination against women and girls and the EU guidelines on children and armed conflict,

– having regard to its resolution of 3 April 2009 on gender mainstreaming in EU external relations and peace-building/nation-building¹,

– having regard to its resolution of 1 June 2006 on women in armed conflicts and their role in post-conflict reconstruction²,

– having regard to its resolution of 17 October 2006 on women in politics³,

– having regard to the 2007 gender-mainstreaming action plan of its Subcommittee on

Security and Defence,

– having regard to its resolution of 7 October 2010 on failures in protection of human rights and justice in the Democratic Republic of Congo¹,

– having regard to the new UN Gender Entity (UN Women),

– having regard to Rule 110(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas violence against women in conflict zones is often an extension of the gender discrimination that already exists in peacetime; whereas this year the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women coincides with the 10th anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which was the first resolution to address the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and to link women's experiences of conflict to the maintenance of international peace and security, covering the inter-linked thematic areas of participation, protection, prevention, relief and recovery,

B. having regard to the International Day against Violence against Women on 25 November,

C. whereas Security Council Resolutions 1820, 1888 and 1889 strengthen and complement Resolution 1325, and whereas the four resolutions must be regarded as the set of Security Council commitments on women, peace and security,

D. whereas the implementation of these commitments is a common concern and responsibility of each UN Member State, be it conflict-affected, donor or other; having regard to the adoption in December 2008 of the EU Guidelines on violence against women and girls and the EU Guidelines on children and armed conflict and combating all forms of discrimination against them, which represent a strong political signal that these are priorities for the Union,

E. whereas the implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1820 and 1325 should be assigned priority in the use of the EU's external financial instruments to provide adequate support for civil-society organisations working in armed conflicts and conflict-affected countries and regions,

F. whereas the European Parliament should observe the broad approach adopted and the implementation of the prospective Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in EU External Action, as well as the implementation of the guidelines on violence against women and children,

G. whereas having a gender perspective in a civilian or military mission greatly increases operational effectiveness, to which the EU could contribute considerable added value by actively concerning itself with women and armed conflict,

H. whereas the EU should enable women to participate in conflict prevention, crisis management, peace talks and post-conflict phases such as post-war reconstruction planning,

I. whereas, when part of a widespread and systematic practice, rape and sexual slavery are recognised under the Geneva Convention as crimes against humanity and war crimes;

whereas rape is also now recognised as an element of the crime of genocide when committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a targeted group; whereas the EU should support efforts to end impunity for perpetrators of sexual violence against women and children,

J. whereas the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) should significantly contribute to further implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820 with regard to both its internal structure and its external actions and policies,

K. whereas the EU has adopted a series of important documents on how to implement UNSC Resolutions 1820 and 1325,

L. whereas 2010 is also the year of the ‘MDG plus 10’ review,

M. whereas only a minority of EU Member States drafted national action plans to implement UNSC Resolution 1325; whereas Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden and the United Kingdom have adopted national action plans,

1. Stresses that the 10th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325 should mark the start of a reinvigorated agenda for the implementation of that resolution, on which no progress can be made without political leadership at the highest levels and increased resources; strongly recommends that this issue be duly addressed in the ongoing review of the EU’s human rights policy when it comes to the elaboration of a comprehensive Human Rights Country Strategy and to the evaluation of the EU Guidelines on violence against women and girls and the EU guidelines on children and armed conflict and combating all forms of discrimination against them;

2. Calls for the allocation of specific and significant financial, human and organisational resources for the participation of women and gender mainstreaming in the field of foreign and security policy; calls for more women to be deployed in police, military and justice and rule-of-law missions and in peace-keeping operations; calls on EU Member States to actively promote participation by women in their bilateral and multilateral relations with states and organisations outside the EU;

3. Urges HR/VC Ashton, in a mid-term review after five years, to monitor the implementation of commitments and facilitate the exchange of good practices;

4. Strongly encourages the HR/VC to also strengthen the EU Task Force on women, peace and security and hopes that it will peer-review the adoption and implementation of national action plans on UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820, conduct systematic gender analyses of Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP) missions and monitor and advise EU delegations in conflict-affected countries and regions;

5. Considers the establishment of the European External Action Service (EEAS) a unique opportunity to reinforce the role of the EU with respect to the implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1820 and 1325;

6. Urges therefore the HR/VC to reinforce and strengthen gender mainstreaming practice and make substantial and highly visible commitments with regard to staffing, financial resources and the organisational hierarchy; urges the HR/VC to form an organisational unit within the
EEAS on women, peace and security within the relevant thematic department and to make sure that in each geographical department and EU delegation at least one full-time post is dedicated to women, peace and security and that these persons are part of, or closely linked to, the EU Task Force;

7. Welcomes the series of public events such as open days implemented by at least the three CSDP missions EUPM, EULEX and EUMM in order to celebrate the 10th anniversary of UNSC Resolution 1325; welcomes the input of the EU's Civilian Planning and Conduct Capability (CPCC) in this respect; recalls that CSDP missions are one of the most important tools of the EU for demonstrating its commitment to the objectives of UNSC Resolutions 1820 and 1325 in crisis-affected countries and regions;

8. Urges the HR/VC and EU Member States to include references to UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in CSDP-related Council Decisions and mission mandates and to make sure that all CSDP missions have at least one Gender Advisor and an Action Plan on how to pursue the objectives of Resolutions 1325 and 1820; urges the HR/VC, EU Member States and Heads of Mission to make cooperation and consultation with local women's organisations a standard element of each mission;

9. Calls for the establishment of adequate public complaint procedures in the context of CSDP missions, which would particularly assist the reporting of sexual and gender-based violence; calls on the HR/VC to include a detailed report on women, peace and security in the six-monthly evaluation of CSDP missions;

10. Recalls the mass gang rape that took place from 30 July to 4 August in the eastern Congo mining district, that at least 8,300 rapes were reported last year in eastern Congo and that at least 1,244 women reported being raped in the first quarter of 2010, which is an average of 14 rapes per day; urges both EU missions in the Democratic Republic of Congo – EUPOL RD Congo and EUSEC RD Congo – to make the fight against sexual violence and the participation of women the main priorities in the context of the effort to reform the Congolese security sector;

11. Stresses that it is important that the EU should appoint more female police officers and soldiers to CSDP missions, in which connection the contingent of female police officers within the UN peace-keeping force in Liberia could be used as a model;

12. Points to the need to establish a code of conduct for EU personnel serving in military and civil missions which makes it clear that sexual exploitation constitutes unjustifiable and criminal behaviour;

13. Calls for the implementation of UNSC Resolutions 1325 and 1820 in the EU's country strategy papers and for the mobilisation of more financial support for the participation of women from conflict-affected countries in European processes; calls on the HR/VC and the Commissioners for Development, Enlargement and Humanitarian Aid to make women, peace and security aspects an integral part of the planning and programming of the external financial instruments such as EIDHR, ICI, IPA and especially DCI and IfS;

14. Emphasises that the Commission should facilitate access for small NGOs to subsidies from the European Instrument on Democracy and Human Rights (EIDHR); recalls that at present many small women's organisations are unable to overcome the bureaucratic obstacles to submission of applications;
15. Calls on the Commissioner for Development to consider it a priority to support work by women's organisations in conflict-affected areas; urges the HR/VC to use the long-term component of the Instrument for Stability (IfS) to allocate funding in support of women's participation in peace, security and reconciliation-related processes and to systematically earmark allocations for women, peace and security in all short-term measures financed under Article 3 of the Instrument for Stability;

16. Takes the view that EU delegations should inform civil society organisations, such as local women’s organisations, about their engagement in conflict regions and consult civil-society organisations in the process of policy planning;

17. Requests a substantial increase in women's participation in every area of operations, including reconciliation work, peace negotiation, peace-building, peace enforcement, peace-keeping and conflict prevention;

18. Calls for an immediate increase in participation by women in all the initiatives aimed at finding solutions to conflicts, including as mediators and negotiators and in the implementation of conflict resolution measures;

19. Calls on the HR/VC to initiate an annual week in which women leaders are consulted and which could complement the UN Global Open Day for Women and Peace, followed by EU delegation reports and follow-ups;

20. Stresses the need for national action plans, which should provide information on the timeframe of the national strategy, set realistic objectives, develop supervisory mechanisms and encourage greater participation by women in monitoring, evaluation and supervisory mechanisms;

21. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission/High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the UN Special Representative on sexual violence in armed conflicts and the newly appointed Head of the UN Gender Entity (UN Women).