

Mari Holmboe Ruge, Forum Norway 1325.

Intervention at the conference Roadmap to 1325, Berlin May 5, 2007

Introduction.

Thank you for the invitation.

In view of the short time for each contribution I will try to respond directly and concretely to the questions asked beforehand.

1. What have been the activities of Norway with regard to the implementation of resolution 1325?

The presentation of a plan of action on the International Women's Day March 8 2006. The plan is signed by 5 Government Ministers: Foreign Affairs, Development, Defence, Police and Equality.

The aim of the plan is to

- *strengthen, coordinate and systematise Norwegian efforts to promote international peace, security and democracy.*
- *work for increased participation and representation of women in local and international peacebuilding processes,*
- *increase the recruitment of women to peace operations by international organisations,*
- *intensify our efforts to safeguard women's rights to protection in conflict situations.*

2. In what state is the action plan?

The plan has now been in force one year. No complete report has yet been published but in a lecture last November the state secretary in the MFA underlined some important points:

"The Government has raised gender issues in areas that have traditionally been "gender free zones".

Training courses in 1325-related issues are being developed for personnel in the Ministry of foreign affairs including the embassies.

Research contracts have been commissioned to study the "gender aspect" of Norwegian peace negotiation efforts in some countries.

Emphasis is put on increasing the recruitment of women to "peace operations".

Internationally Norway offered in 2005 to finance a study for the DPKO on lessons learned and best practices regarding how effective implementation of a gender perspective can contribute to the success of a peace mission. The mission took place in 2006. Norway, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom undertook a joint donor review of DPKO's implementation of resolution 1325 in Congo, Kosovo, Sierra Leone and Liberia. *The overall conclusion was that significant progress has been made and that the Gender Advisors are doing an excellent job. However, commitment and accountability is still limited.*

Norway is a member of UN Peacebuilding Commission with a special responsibility for Burundi. The ministry is trying to get in contact with the civil society there

On March 8 2007 the Minister of development presented a plan of action for women's rights and equality in development.

3. How has it been taken on by the government?

I am not sure what is exactly meant by this question but will respond by giving some information on the state budget for 2007. In this budget the *Ministry of foreign affairs* increased the amount of money for women and equality substantially and also made political commitments in the text.

The implementation of resolution 1325 will be prioritized to make gender and equality "a general theme through focussed initiatives. Norway shall be proactive internationally in order to

strengthen the participation of women and the integration of a gender perspective in all efforts for conflict management.”

The Ministry of development is financing and promoting a number of 1325-related development projects, and the Minister regularly underlines the importance of gender issues and women participation as a general approach to development. 1325 is being actively used by the *Ministry of Defence* to increase the recruitment of women into the military, reflecting the fact that international military operations are increasing. 12 % of the Norwegian military personnel in Afghanistan are women. The *Ministry of police* has increased the recruitment of women into the police force, also preparing for international tasks. In the *Ministry of equality* there has been very little 1325-related activity reported. The *Ministry of Education* has so far not been involved, but there is a need for education on 1325 issues in the school system. WILPF Norway has asked for this but so far there has been little interest reported. We hope this will improve in the near future.

4. How much action has there been behind the action plan?

Our impression is that the background work for the plan was limited to the ministry of foreign affairs and defence, and to the researchers that were commissioned to develop the draft plan.

5. What has been the role of civil society - which groups have been involved?

The government is working closely with the major humanitarian organisations in Norway on international issues, including peace and security issues. The action plan obligates NGOs to integrate gender perspectives into their international project applications and to report on the results in order to get funding. The NGOs are also encouraged to develop 1325-relevant codes of conduct for their employees.

The women's and peace organisations have weaker links with the government in these matters. However it was a women's organisation which in 2001 took contact with the MFA, asking how Norway planned to implement the resolution 1325, in particular with regard to Norway's active role in peace negotiations in Sri Lanka. In 2003 a group of NGOs including WILPF Norway introduced the UNIFEM report Women, War, Peace in Norway and for the first time got a public statement from a government politician in Norway on 1325. Later the organising group formed the network Forum Norway 1325. Although not officially invited, we contributed many proposals and viewpoints to the Ministry during the preparation of the Action plan.

6. What strategies have they pursued?

The relationship between the Government and the NGOs have been formalised into a contact forum for 1325, supposed to meet two times a year. The last meeting took place in June 2006. Forum Norway 1325 has asked for more frequent meetings and the opportunity to have analyses and discussions, but this has so far not taken place.

Forum Norway has tried to get funding for a small secretariat to facilitate and coordinate NGO 1325 work, to have public seminars, develop training courses and maintain a website, www.fn1325.no. This has so far been refused by the MFA but we have received 7500 euro from the Ministry of equality as a subsidy for our web page. However we do not have funds to pay anyone to maintain the page.

7. Wishes for the future:

- A stronger infrastructure for 1325 issues in the Government system. Only a small group in the MFA is working on these matters, disproportionate to the importance given to these issues in official statements in the UN and at international conferences.
- A closer cooperation with the NGO society in Norway, involving us in discussions and analyses, as well as contributing financially to our activities in informing the Norwegian public in 1325 matters.
- An increased awareness of 1325 perspectives in national policies relating to women – in particular concerning the fight against violence against women, trafficking, the situation for immigrant women in Norway etc.
- Most important: much more emphasis to enable women in Norway and internationally to become *peace-makers*, in addition to being conflict solvers and activists in post conflict reconstruction.
- Active recruitment and training programs for young women who aim to work internationally and who do not wish to join either the police force or the military!

Thank you.