



**KINGDOM OF BELGIUM**

***Second National Action Plan “Women, Peace, Security” (2013-2016),  
implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325.***

*Unofficial translation*

# ***WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY***

## ***BELGIAN NATIONAL ACTION PLAN 2013-2016***

### **Introduction**

#### Women, war and peace

Wars and other armed conflicts have always impacted women in a different way than men. While men are more often directly involved in the fighting, women also feel the effects, whether indirectly, as a result of difficult and dangerous conditions, or directly, when they become civilian victims. The United Nations (UN) has reported that almost 90 % of victims of contemporary conflicts were civilians, most of whom were women and children. As regards the victims of specific forms of sexual violence that occur in situations of war, these are also mainly female.

Furthermore, women feel the effects of conflict longer than men once it has ended. Indeed, they are rarely, if ever, involved in peace negotiations and preparations for reconstruction. As a result, their specific needs are neither heard nor taken into account. The consequences of sexual violence perpetrated during conflict situations (dishonour and exclusion from the community, pregnancy, health problems, etc.) do not, for that matter, disappear with the conflict. Even worse, acts of sexual violence often continue after the end of hostilities and become, to a certain degree, the "norm".

#### Resolution 1325

In order to put an end to such situations, on 31 October 2000, the UN Security Council adopted by consensus resolution 1325 entitled "Women, peace and security". On the one hand, the objective of this resolution is to prevent violence against women and girls and to protect them from such violence. On the other hand, the resolution aims to increase women's participation in decision-making in the areas of peace and security, for example within the context of peace negotiations or discussions relating to reconstruction in the aftermath of conflicts. This focus on increasing women's participation in decision-making is a key element of the resolution and necessitates a different approach to women's role in conflicts. Women must not only be considered as victims. Through empowerment they should get the possibility of deciding their own fate and contributing to the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peace building.

The resolution is applied both by the member states of the UN and by the UN itself, as well as by other international organisations such as NATO, the EU and the OSCE. The parties can apply the resolution by, amongst other things, taking particular measures, when intervening in conflicts, to protect women and fulfil their specific needs, by firmly condemning sexual violence and by supporting the establishment of mechanisms to combat violence against women. The resolution's objective can also be pursued by sending more women on international missions, by assigning more positions to women within international organisations and by encouraging other countries to involve women in negotiations.

In 2004, the UN Security Council called on all member states to draw up a national action plan (NAP) in order to give concrete effect to the implementation of resolution 1325. Indeed, national action plans are considered to be the most effective method of achieving the resolution's objectives.

#### Follow-up resolutions

On 19 June 2008, the Security Council unanimously adopted a second resolution on the theme of women, peace and security. Resolution 1820 focuses mainly on sexual violence, which is condemned in all its forms. The Security Council recognises that the use of sexual violence as a tactic of war represents a threat to security and stability. An appropriate response is therefore required. Furthermore, sexual violence can be considered a war crime, a crime against humanity and, in certain circumstances, an act of genocide and, in this respect and in accordance with the Rome Statute, be prosecuted as such. The resolution also calls for the combating of impunity in the area of sexual violence.

Resolution 1888, which was unanimously adopted by the Security Council on 30 September 2009, provides instruments to facilitate the implementation of resolution 1820. Thus, the Secretary-General is among others requested to appoint a Special Representative in the area of sexual violence, to submit annual reports to the Council and to ensure more systematic reporting on incidents of trends, emerging patterns of attack, and early warning indicators of the use of sexual violence in armed conflict in all relevant reports to the Security Council.

Under the terms of resolution 1889, the Council calls for particular attention to be given to the specific needs of women and their participation in all stages of the peace process. The resolution, unanimously adopted by the Security Council on 5 October 2009, calls, amongst others, for the definition of indicators permitting measurement of the application of resolution 1325 and the inclusion of the needs of women in activities such as the collection and analysis of data as well as planning for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration, and the organisation of refugee camps.

On 16 December 2010, the Security Council reaffirmed the importance of combating sexual violence and the application of resolutions 1820 and 1888 by unanimously adopting resolution 1960. This resolution encourages the Secretary-General to include in his reports submitted pursuant to resolutions 1820 and 1888 detailed information on parties to armed conflict that are credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for acts of rape or other forms of sexual violence and specifically calls upon him to give particular attention to expertise concerning gender issues, the participation of women in peacekeeping missions and training in the area of gender-based and sexual violence.

Resolution 1983, which was unanimously adopted by the Security Council on 7 June 2011, encourages the incorporation of HIV prevention, treatment, care and support in the implementation of mandated tasks of peacekeeping operations. The resolution calls for specific attention for women and emphasises that the empowerment of women is necessary and that efforts must be taken to put an end to sexual and gender-based violence.

On 24 June 2013, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2106. This resolution focuses on the issue of sexual violence and specifically calls for closer monitoring of commitments in terms of combating sexual violence and, once again, demands, in the case of conflict, that all parties involved put an immediate end to acts of sexual violence. The resolution also encourages all actors to involve women in prevention and protection measures and emphasises the important role that women and civil society can play in combating sexual violence.

### Belgium

The promotion and protection of human rights is a priority for Belgium, which attaches great importance to the universality of such rights and strives to ensure that they are respected throughout the world. In its federal policies, Belgium is committed to promoting such rights and also active at EU, OSCE and Council of Europe level and acts within international UN institutions as well as on the ground, via its network of diplomatic missions.

Belgium also assigns great importance to the specific issue of the place of women in our society. At national level, various laws promote gender equality. One such law is the gender mainstreaming law of 12 January 2007. Internationally, Belgium has subscribed to several international conventions and agreements. For instance, Belgium has signed up to the Beijing Platform for Action and has ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), as well as its optional protocol.

### The first Belgian national action plan pursuant to resolution 1325

In accordance with the resolution and the call to draw up a NAP, the Council of Ministers of 8 February 2009 adopted the first Belgian NAP, which was established under the auspices of the Federal Public Service (FPS) Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation, in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence, the FPS Interior, the FPS Justice, the Institute for the equality of women and men and the Commission on Women and Development.

In force between 2009 and 2012 inclusive, the first Belgian NAP pursuant to resolution 1325 was a significant step forward for the issue of "women, peace and security". For the first time, an inventory was made of all actions concerning the situation of women in conflict and post-conflict zones at federal level in Belgium, and commitments were made by the actors concerned.

In December 2011, a progress report was submitted by the actors concerned relating to the actions already undertaken during this period. This progress report was presented to civil society and discussed at a conference held on 12 December 2011.

### Lessons learned and second Belgian national action plan

The 2009-2012 NAP has enabled progress to be made in the right direction. The experience gained from the first plan and the debate conducted with civil society have also enabled certain lessons to be learned.

Thus, the second NAP has opted for a new structure aimed at clearly reflecting the current priorities of the Belgian federal government. The priority objectives of this NAP are:

1. The international normative framework;
2. Gender mainstreaming within the context of resolution 1325;
3. The protection of women and girls from all forms of violence, including sexual violence;
4. Women's participation in peacekeeping and peace-building processes;
5. Support for the implementation of resolution 1325 and the NAP;
6. Follow-up, reporting and monitoring.

Each objective is broken down into different goals, with each goal in turn being sub-divided into lines of action. These lines of action outline the framework in which the actions deemed necessary to achieve the objectives should be undertaken. The purpose of this new structure is also to more clearly highlight which lines of action will be carried out and which body/bodies is/are responsible for it.

In addition, the new NAP aims to emphasise the actions necessary to implement resolution 1325 and follow-up resolutions, while placing less emphasis on aspects relating to already well-established values.

The NAP endeavours to increase policy coherence and avoid actions being undertaken in an isolated, non-consultative manner.

Consideration was also given, when drawing up the plan, to the various elements arising from the follow-up resolutions.

Implementation of the plan applies both within Belgium as well as to Belgian policy with regard to partner countries of Belgian Development Cooperation, countries with which Belgium maintains bilateral relations, international organisations of which Belgium is a member, countries where Belgian armed forces are active, and with regard to third party countries. In three target countries, the coordinated action of departments will provide the opportunity to broaden experience with this NAP and continue to apply it. These countries are Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Mali. Monitoring in these countries can serve as a springboard for achieving the objectives of resolution 1325 in other countries, via the instruments available to our country as a result, amongst others, of diplomacy, development cooperation, partnerships and treaties (trade, environmental).

In order to respond to the increasing demand for measurability and reporting, this new NAP offers a control mechanism consisting of instruments for operational monitoring which take indicators from the UN and EU into account as well as best practice from abroad. In the same context, provision has been made for annual reporting to parliament to ensure regular follow-up of the NAP. These reports will be presented to parliament at the start of each year and will provide information about actions carried out during the previous year. The first report under this system will be presented to parliament at the beginning of 2015. The monitoring instruments, which are both quantitative and qualitative by nature, will be refined if necessary in order to monitor the impact of the strategy and of the lines of action. This monitoring will provide an indication of actions carried out in order to achieve the lines of action that have been set. Annex 3<sup>1</sup> provides an assessment of the situation at the launch of the second NAP. This assessment will form the basis for annual reporting from 2015 onwards and will enable developments in the implementation of the NAP to be tracked. Annex 4 details the indicators established by the EU.

A list of abbreviations is attached in annex 1. The references to resolution 1325, the first NAP (2009-2012) and the assessment of the situation presented on 12 December 2011 can be consulted in annex 2.

---

<sup>1</sup>The annexes are only available in Dutch or French.

Drafting of this NAP was coordinated by the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation and the Institute for the equality of women and men and prepared in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence, the FPS Interior and the FPS Justice. Civil society also had the chance to examine it during a consultation meeting organised by the FPS Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation.

## **OBJECTIVE 1. International normative framework**

The rights of women must be respected not only during times of conflict but also during peacetime. If violence against women, including sexual violence, is a daily reality in peacetime, preventing it during periods of armed conflict will be even more difficult and the measures aimed at protecting women from violence will require much greater effort and resources. Where women habitually have a lower status, little attention will be given to their needs within the context of peace negotiations or processes of reconstruction, presuming that they even get the opportunity to take part in such negotiations and processes or direct them.

The foundation for implementing resolution 1325 must always be put in place before the conflict and guaranteed during and after it. This foundation must be a strong social, political and economic position for women, based on dignity, respect and empowerment. This is an essential condition for combating discrimination, permitting women's interests to be protected, ensuring their access to basic resources and guaranteeing their physical, mental and social well-being. It is only when such a framework is in place that it is possible to develop instruments and structures in which women can find refuge during periods of conflict. Such a framework is therefore essential for preventing violence against women during periods of conflict.

Finally, equality between men and women is the basis of a peaceful, balanced community which offers protection to the entire population and cultivates respect for the other.

The objective is, therefore, to maintain and strengthen the permanent effort engaged by Belgium for the social, political and economic emancipation of women in (pre-/post-) conflict zones. Women's position must be enhanced via all channels and all sectors, in all areas: from civil and political rights to sexual and reproductive rights, as well as socioeconomic and cultural rights and the right not to be subjected to either violence or torture.

Several of these rights are rooted in international conventions and texts such as the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Geneva Conventions and their additional Protocols, the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo. As well as basing these rights on conventions, ensuring that said conventions are applied is of utmost importance: it is necessary to ensure that these rights are effectively respected. Finally, it is necessary to make efforts and find ways of concretely improving the legal, economic, political and social position of women by, amongst other things, distributing information, training, intervention and programmes of action. The efforts must focus on women's effective access to knowledge, revenue and the factors of production with a view to promoting their empowerment. All of the financial resources provided for international cooperation must be used in a manner that supports the enhancement of the position of women.



No.	GOAL	LINES OF ACTION	MONITORING INSTRUMENTS	DEPARTMENTS
1.a	Ensure that treaties and conventions relating to improving the position and the empowerment of women are taken into account.	Apply in Belgium the international conventions that protect the rights of women <sup>2</sup> .	Periodic reporting under CEDAW. Responses to relevant questionnaires from the UN.	Foreign Affairs Development Defence Interior Justice Equality
1.b		Continue to actively work within the context of the General Assembly, the CSW and the Human Rights Council to promote the rights of women, particularly in (post-)conflict countries.	CSW actions. Human Rights Council actions.	Foreign Affairs Equality
1.c		Systematically call on all countries to sign up to and comply with conventions that protect women's rights <sup>3</sup> and revoke their reservations.	Interventions carried out. Appeals within the context of policies and conventions concluded.	Foreign Affairs Development
2.a	Ensure respect for women's sexual and reproductive rights.	Include respect for health and sexual and reproductive rights in humanitarian aid programmes and reconstruction programmes.	Inclusion of this component in policy and procedures.	Development
2.b		Call on all countries to guarantee respect for the sexual and reproductive rights of women and defend these rights at the international level.	Interventions carried out and expertise provided.	Foreign Affairs Development
2.c		Advocate for the mention of sexual and reproductive rights in relevant international documents.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Development Equality
3.a	Improve the legal framework and rules of procedure for better access of women to justice (national /international).	Financially support the International Criminal Court trust fund for victims.	Financial support.	Justice
3.b		Support initiatives which facilitate access to justice of women and girls to ensure protection of	Initiatives supported.	Foreign Affairs Development

<sup>2</sup> Amongst others, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its optional protocol, the Beijing Platform for Action, resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889 and 1960 of the UN Security Council, and the resolutions on violence against women of the UN General Assembly and Human Rights Council, the Declaration on Equality of Women and Men, the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence of the Council of Europe, the Geneva Conventions and their additional protocols and the Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

<sup>3</sup> Idem

		their rights (land/inheritance/discrimination, etc.)		Justice Defence Interior
3.c		Call on all countries to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
3.d		Call on all countries to apply the broadest definition of sexual violence, as determined by the International Criminal Court.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
4.a	Support the promotion of the position of women in countries in situations of fragility.	Prioritise and financially support gender equality and the empowerment of women, particularly in countries in fragile situations.	Aspect in each new Indicative Cooperation Programme and in all of the priority sector projects and programmes for countries in fragile situations.	Development
4.b.		Bringing all interventions on the ground within a strategic, coherent framework so as to enhance the position and empowerment of women.	Framework developed and applied.	Development
4.c		Offer expertise and participate in the exchange of best practices.	Support provided.	Equality Development
4.d		Support UN Women and its role in promoting equality between women and men and the empowerment of women.	Interventions carried out. Projects or programmes which contribute to gender equality in countries in fragile situations. Expertise provided.	Foreign Affairs Development
4.e		Support for the Action Plan for the Promotion of Gender Equality of the Special Representative of the OSCE for gender equality issues.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
4.f		Act within the context of political advocacy and international declarations.	Interventions carried out. Indicative Cooperation Programmes.	Foreign Affairs Development

## **OBJECTIVE 2. Integrating of the gender perspective by Belgium within the context of resolution 1325**

The specific needs of women must be taken into account before, during and after armed conflicts. An effort must be made to structurally incorporate a focus on these needs in all policies and actions, in all strategic areas and at all levels and in the actions of all of the actors concerned. This strategy, referred to as gender mainstreaming, makes gender equality a cross-cutting value. Taking gender into account means considering any differences in the situation of women and men. Within the context of the NAP, the gender perspective specifically includes the difference in situation in terms of health and sexual and reproductive rights and the specific social and economic position of women.

Its application will benefit the combat of violence against women. Indeed, during periods of conflict, it is often important to react quickly. It is even more important, therefore, to reflect on the situation and on the specific needs of women in advance, so that these aspects are not neglected during emergency interventions. This approach also encourages women's participation in decision-making.

This objective describes the lines of action that will be undertaken to achieve gender mainstreaming on a systematic basis. To be effective, gender mainstreaming must be achieved at all levels and in all sectors: both international and regional organisations and individual member states must, within their own operation, take into account the needs and interests of women, not only in the area of foreign affairs and development cooperation but also in defence or interior affairs. Ideally, a coherent policy should be put in place to ensure that this aspect is not forgotten in the interactions between the different levels and sectors.

Furthermore, consideration must be given to gender mainstreaming when carrying out any action, from the drafting of laws and conventions to the development of asylum procedures and the definition of tasks for peacekeeping missions and their evaluation through the putting in place of humanitarian aid programmes and the granting of subsidies.

In addition, the cross-cutting character of this strategy requires that the actors who normally do not work in the area of equal opportunities also take this aspect into account in their own work. In order to ensure that everyone takes the needs and interests of women into account, it is essential that the main training courses include a "gender" component. The provision of experts in gender equality (gender equality advisor, coordinator for gender equality, etc.) is another important element likely to ensure that actors who do not have experience in the area of equal opportunities do not lose sight of this aspect.

At the federal level in Belgium, the 'gender mainstreaming law' of 12 January 2007<sup>4</sup> requires every public administration to ensure that the gender perspective is integrated into all of its policies, measures, budget preparations or actions. To ensure, amongst other things, that the Belgian

---

<sup>4</sup> Law aimed at monitoring the application of resolutions from the World Conference on Women held in Beijing in September 1995 and at integrating the gender perspective into all federal policies (Belgian Official Gazette of 13 February 2007).

Development Cooperation includes gender in a cross-cutting manner in all of its interventions, the issue of gender equality has been defined as a priority cross-cutting theme by the law of 19 March 2013 relating to Belgian Development Cooperation.<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> Law relating to Belgian Development Cooperation (Belgian Official Gazette of 12 April 2013).

N°	GOAL	LINES OF ACTION	MONITORING INSTRUMENTS	DEPARTMENTS
5.a	Ensure consideration of the different needs of women and men and implementation of the "gender mainstreaming law" within all departments and the mainstreaming of gender referred to in the law on development cooperation.	Inform personnel about gender mainstreaming.	Methods of information used.	Foreign Affairs Development Defence Interior
5.b		Develop, implement and update a strategy or action plan in relation to gender mainstreaming.	Strategy adopted and implemented.	Development Defence
5.c		Support departments in implementing the "gender mainstreaming law".	Support provided.	Equality
5.d		Coordinate at local level in the partner countries with regard to gender.	Reporting on the EU Plan of Action on Gender.	Development
5.e		Integrate the gender perspective into reports by external missions on the local situation.	Actions undertaken.	Foreign Affairs
5.f		Encourage a focus on the gender perspective when determining the Belgian position in multilateral and bilateral affairs.	Positions in which the gender perspective is included.	Foreign Affairs Development
6.a		Encourage awareness of the gender perspective amongst personnel.	Integrate the gender perspective in a substantial manner into basic training <sup>6</sup> .	Basic training incorporating the gender perspective.
6.b	Integrate the gender perspective into continuing education <sup>7</sup> .		Continuing education incorporating the gender perspective.	Defence Interior-Federal Police
6.c	Integrate the gender perspective into training for personnel assigned to peace missions and civilian crisis management missions.		Training incorporating the gender perspective.	Foreign Affairs Defence Interior-Federal Police
6.d	Develop training material for raising awareness of gender issues.		Material developed.	Defence
7.a	Develop and manage gender expertise.	Provide and train gender experts within departments.	Experts provided and trained.	Foreign Affairs Development

<sup>6</sup> Within the Federal Police, the theme of gender will be mainstreamed across all modules of new training courses.

<sup>7</sup> Within the Federal Police, the theme of gender will be mainstreamed across all modules of new training courses.

				Defence Interior Justice
7.b		Provide and train gender experts for peacekeeping missions.	Experts provided and trained.	Defence
7.c		Manage and rely on gender expertise when preparing, implementing and monitoring peacekeeping missions.	Database. Experts provided. Training plan.	Defence
8.a	Integrate the gender perspective into the attribution of funding and grants.	Consider the presence of the gender perspective in grant applications as an important element for approval of such applications.	Grants awarded to projects which explicitly take the gender perspective into account.	Foreign Affairs Development
8.b		Draw attention to gender equality at donor conferences.	Interventions carried out.	Development
9.	Ensure that the gender perspective is taken into account in the operation of international organisations.	Advocate for the integration of the gender perspective into the agenda and into relevant reports and resolutions of international organisations.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
10.a	Ensure that the gender perspective is taken into account in peace missions, civilian crisis management missions and peace-building processes.	Distribute amongst partners best practices and recommendations in terms of integration of the gender perspective into peacekeeping missions and advocate for their application in future missions.	Distribution of best practices. Advocate for their application.	Defence
10.b		Collaborate with international organisations and their member states within the context of collecting relevant data on gender equality and support for mechanisms of consultation and coordination.	Gender database. Support provided	Defence
10.c		Give extra attention to the gender perspective when planning, training and developing SSR and DDR programmes.	Projects or programmes which contribute to gender equality in countries in fragile situations.	Defence
10.d		Monitor the integration of the gender perspective into the support programmes for the security sector.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Development
10.e		Advocate for the structural integration of the gender perspective into preparations and analyses	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs

		of the mandate and budget for peace missions and civilian crisis management missions and for the maintenance of the resources necessary to do this.		
10.f		Promote within the Peace-Building Commission the integration of the gender perspective into the preparation of new "Integrated Peace-Building Strategies" and the two-yearly reviews of strategic frameworks.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
10.g		As part of the process of disarmament and rehabilitation, promote a civilian approach and advocate for expertise from international organisations or international civilian missions.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
11.	Ensure that the specific needs of women are taken into account in justice systems.	Advocate for the integration of the gender perspective into documents on the rule of law and transitional justice and support transitional mechanisms of justice which have a real impact on gender equality.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Development
12.	Ensure the taking into account of the gender perspective in humanitarian aid.	Implement and enhance the procedure in the area of gender mainstreaming in agreements with international humanitarian aid organisations which receive financial support.	Procedure followed.	Development
13.a	Take the gender perspective into account in the refugee issue.	Give consideration to the specific needs of women during applications for asylum.	Number and percentage of men and women applying for asylum who have received the status of refugee or have benefitted from subsidiary protection. Guidelines. Exchange of information.	Interior-CGRS/Office for Foreigners
13.b		Give consideration to the specific needs of women when hosting and accommodating refugees.	Equipment and buildings adapted to the needs of women.	Interior-Fedasil
13.c		Give consideration to the specific needs of women in terms of resettlement in Belgium.	Number of vulnerable refugees resettled in Belgium, broken down by gender.	Interior-CGRS

### **OBJECTIVE 3. Protection of women and girls from all forms of violence, including sexual violence**

In modern-day armed conflicts, there are more casualties amongst the civilian population than amongst the ranks of the armed combatants. In addition, the majority of civilian casualties are women and children. In every approach to such conflicts, the security and protection of the civilian population must always be a priority concern. Both the main players in the conflict and any parties involved in any way must take the necessary measures to guarantee safety, especially the safety of women and children.

Furthermore, women are far more often the victims of a specific type of violence: sexual violence. In certain contexts, women are already in a subordinate position in relation to men, making them even more vulnerable to forms of violence. A conflict situation accentuates inequality and increases the risk of being exposed to violence. The pressure and chaos caused by war results in customs being forgotten and normalises the use of violence. What's more, the carrying of a weapon confers a certain amount of power which can enhance existing patterns of domination and submission. These various factors result, during armed conflicts, in a skyrocketing risk for a woman of being the victim of sexual violence.

Human trafficking is another phenomenon whose primary victims are women and children. Internationally, the trafficking of women is recognised as a form of violence against women which must be combated most vigorously. Particular attention must be given to armed conflicts: the chaos produced by such conflicts enables human trafficking to be carried out discreetly.

Often, it is the situation caused by the conflict – and not the behaviour of the actors – that is invoked to justify such violence. This results in the normalisation of this revolting act and the continued use of such practices not only during but often after the conflicts. Victims, whose lives are often destroyed, are therefore deprived of any chance of obtaining justice. Sexual violence cannot be tolerated in any circumstances and this message must be very clear.

Rape is also often used as a tactic of war. In this case, sexual violence is deliberately used to instil terror and disorder in communities: women are rejected as they have been dishonoured and men are deprived of status as they were not able to protect their wife. Such acts of violence constitute serious breaches of human rights and, since the adoption of the Rome Statute and the approval of UN Security Council resolution 1820, may be recognised as war crimes, crimes against humanity or acts of genocide and punishable as such.

It is essential that we concern ourselves with this issue not only before, but also during and after a conflict. At all of these times, violence must be prevented or stopped through, amongst other things, awareness-raising campaigns and concrete interventions. Sufficient protection must also be given to women and children, including in the case of domestic violence. Protection of the civilian population, and more particularly the protection of women from sexual violence, can be incorporated into the mandates of international peacekeeping missions. Finally, by combating impunity, an attempt is made to maintain the focus on the issue after the end of the conflict. Doing so enables a clear message to be sent to the community, namely that it is the actors who are to blame and not the victims. It is, in this way, possible to contribute to the destigmatization of the victims of sexual



violence. Combating impunity should have a dissuasive, and thereby preventive, effect within the context of future conflicts and prevent the normalisation of sexual violence in post-conflict situations.

Finally, everything must be done to ensure that the victims of violence have access to appropriate multi-disciplinary services and to provide comprehensive assistance based on psychological, medical and social support. Women must be encouraged and, especially, have the opportunity, in such cases, of taking the reins themselves in order to be able to actively participate in preventing conflicts and peace-building.

Objective 3 outlines the goals pursued at the federal level to protect women and girls from all forms of violence within the context of resolution 1325, as well as the proposed lines of action to achieve these goals.

N°	GOAL	LINES OF ACTION	MONITORING INSTRUMENTS	DEPARTMENTS
14.a	Draw attention to the phenomenon of violence against women.	Prioritise, at political and operational level, the combating of all forms of violence during and after armed conflicts, with a particular focus on sexual violence.	Interventions carried out. Support and adoption of resolutions.	Foreign Affairs Development Defence Interior Justice Equality
14.b		Support, in Belgium and in the partner countries, actions to raise awareness of the issue of sexual violence before, during and after armed conflicts.	Interventions carried out.	Development
14.c		Provide for the presence of a legal expert as a trainer in the area of violence against women.	Internal communication with potential experts.	Justice
15.	Raise awareness amongst personnel prior to deployment.	During the preparation for peacekeeping missions and the pre-deployment training given in Belgium, ask that particular attention be given to violence against women and children and emphasise the need to offer them protection from such violence.	Concrete action undertaken.	Defence
16.a	Impose zero tolerance for Belgian peacekeeping forces in terms of violence against women.	Prosecute those responsible for sexual violence within the defence forces.	Ratio of number of complaints versus number of prosecutions. Ratio of number of prosecutions versus number of convictions.	Defence
16.b		Establish a Belgian code of conduct and highlight the zero tolerance approach in it.	Belgian code drawn up.	Defence
16.c		Apply the UN and NATO code of conduct within Belgian army ranks and promote it at the international level.	Application and promotion.	Defence

17.a	Combat impunity with regard to violence against women and combat the normalisation of forms of (sexual) violence.	Support programmes and projects focusing on the re-establishment of the rule of law in order to combat the impunity of acts of violence against women.	Interventions carried out.	Development
17.b		Support initiatives that contribute to the development and application, in third party countries, of national legislation punishing sexual violence and that encourage women and girls to file complaints when they are victims of sexual violence.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Development Justice
17.c		Maintain support for the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women.	Interventions carried out. Support for relevant resolutions.	Foreign Affairs
17.d		Encourage states to incorporate the fight against sexual violence into transitional justice mechanisms and criminal law and to consider the fight against sexual violence as the responsibility of each state (ownership).	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Development
17.e		Advocate for the combating of impunity and encourage prosecutions both nationally and internationally.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
18.a	Monitor the security and protection from all forms of violence of women and girls in countries in fragile situations.	Monitor the situation of women in intervention zones and develop a system of reporting in the area of violence against women.	Monitoring/Early warning indicators. Interventions carried out.	Defence Development
18.b		Continue action within the context of the convention on the prohibition of cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines by placing particular emphasis on the effects of such weapons on women and children.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Defence

18.c		Ensure, on a continuous basis, compliance with article 7.4 within the context of the application of the Arms Trade Treaty (prohibition on exports in case of gender-based violence/violence against women and children).	Integration of the gender perspective into Community action by the EU, in support of the application of the Arms Trade Treaty in third party countries.	Foreign Affairs
18.d		Give particular attention to women's participation in de-mining programmes and involve women in decisions relating to which areas should be defined as a priority.	Creation of a gender criterion that will be systematically monitored as part of the evaluation of new de-mining projects.	Foreign Affairs Defence
18.e		Support initiatives by international, Belgian and local NGOs that work to protect women and that combat sexual violence, by, amongst other things, the integrated provision of medical and psycho-social care and socio-economic reintegration of victims and the offer of protection and housing.	Support actions. Projects or programmes that contribute to gender equality in countries in situations of fragility.	Foreign Affairs Development
19.a	Ensure the security and protection of women and girls within the context of humanitarian work.	Take account of the protection of women and girls within the context of humanitarian duties and DDR and SSR programmes such as the construction of refugee camps.	Projects or programmes which contribute to gender equality in countries in fragile situations.	Defence
19.b		Ask aid organisations to consider the security of women and girls as a priority when organising and managing refugee camps.	Procedure followed.	Development
20.a	Combat human trafficking.	Make the combating of human trafficking a priority in the national security plan.	Indications of this priority.	Interior
20.b		Provide aid and assistance to victims of human trafficking in Belgium.	Instruments of aid and assistance. Number of victims of human trafficking who have obtained a residence permit. Number of victims of human trafficking protected.	Interior-Office for Foreigners Justice

20.c		Continue to integrate human trafficking into bilateral agreements concerning police cooperation.	Agreements including the issue of human trafficking.	Interior
20.d		Emphasise human trafficking as part of the concept of "human security" during military operations.	Interventions carried out.	Defence
20.e		Maintain support for the mandate of the UN Special Rapporteur on human trafficking.	Interventions carried out. Support for relevant resolutions.	Foreign Affairs

#### **OBJECTIVE 4. Participation of women in peacekeeping and peace-building processes**

It is still all too often the case that important decisions within the context of peace processes are taken by groups composed exclusively of men. Women's aspirations are, therefore, frequently forgotten or even just simply ignored. In order to ensure that the specific needs of women are taken into account, it is essential that they are permitted to participate in decision-making in relation to aspects likely to have an impact on their lives. Women's participation in decision-making processes must be guaranteed, especially in situations where they are particularly vulnerable.

During periods of conflict, women are often the ones who work in the fields, keep the economy going and maintain infrastructure. This is why their point of view is important when identifying priorities in terms of reconstruction.

Mixed representation is therefore the best guarantee of a balanced decision-making process that takes the entire population and all important factors into account. Women's participation in decision-making processes also enhances the legitimacy of any proposals and solutions adopted at the conclusion of these processes.

It is also essential that women are represented in jobs that are in direct contact with the population. Indeed, for many women who have been victims of violence, it is important to be able to tell their story to another woman. The cultural context may also result in the presence of women being required to ensure contact with the local female population, even more so in countries where there continues to be a strict separation between the traditional roles of women and men. In order to give a general overview of the situation, it must be possible to communicate with both groups.

Ultimately, the presence of women at all levels, in all institutions and in all jobs also serves as an example for other women and a sign for men. It shows the extent to which it is essential that women make their voices heard and are heard. This can encourage women to play a more active role in an area where they can make a difference.

This section of the NAP presents the different lines of action that should enable women's participation in peace processes to be increased. Some of the initiatives mentioned should have an impact on women's participation within Belgian federal bodies involved in these types of processes.

Belgium will also work to increase the participation of women in international organisations, peacekeeping missions and civilian crisis management missions.

Finally, this section outlines the lines of action which must result in increased participation by women and women's organisations in peace negotiations and decisions relating to reconstruction.

N°	GOAL	LINES OF ACTION	MONITORING INSTRUMENTS	DEPARTMENTS
21.	Ensure increased women's representation within federal administrations <sup>8</sup> .	Conduct an active recruitment policy and analyse trends in the recruitment of women and adapt actions based on this analysis <sup>9, 10</sup> .	Actions taken in relation to recruitment to attract more women. Proportion of men and women amongst diplomats, consuls, cooperation attachés, soldiers and integrated police.	Foreign Affairs Development Defence Interior-Federal police
22.	Ensure increased women's representation within international organisations.	Encourage applications by Belgian women for international organisations.	Actions of encouragement.	Foreign Affairs Development Defence Interior Justice
23.a	Ensure increased women's representation within peace missions <sup>11</sup> and civilian crisis management missions.	Encourage applications by Belgian women for peace missions.	Changes in percentage of Belgian women in peace missions.	Defence
23.b		Encourage women in the federal police to apply for civilian crisis management missions.	Actions of encouragement. Proportion of men and women amongst personnel participating in EU civilian crisis management missions.	Interior-Federal police
23.c		Encourage women's participation in basic generic training prior to deployment on civilian crisis management missions.	Actions of encouragement.	Foreign Affairs Development Justice Interior-Federal police

<sup>8</sup> The presence of more women within federal administrations is a necessary condition, without which the submission of more applications by women for international organisations and peace missions and civilian crisis management missions will not be possible.

<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, the Department of Defence does not wish to distinguish between men and women in its statute. It recruits soldiers, irrespective of their gender, according to the skills required by the organisation or for a particular role. It therefore wants to attract applications from women without wanting to impose scales (via a quota system, targets or other methods) on recruitment, for participation in operations or in international organisations.

<sup>10</sup> The federal police wants to achieve increased female representation by conducting a study amongst all female members of personnel regarding the causes and factors explaining why women do not participate in promotions.

<sup>11</sup> Ditto footnote 8.

23.d		Advocate internationally for the participation of a greater number of women in peace missions and civilian crisis management missions.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Defence Interior
24.a	Ensure greater representation of women in peace negotiations and encourage the institutionalisation of women's role in peace processes.	Systematise consultation with local women and women's organisations within the context of missions of inquiry and circulate the data collected via the partners concerned.	Consultations.	Defence
24.b		Within the context of the peace processes supported by Belgium, emphasise the need to appoint female mediators and negotiators.	Number and percentage of female mediators and negotiators and women's organisations present at formal and informal peace negotiations supported by Belgium. Support for women's participation in peace negotiations.	Foreign Affairs
24.c		Advocate internationally for inclusion of more women in delegations participating in peace and democracy-building negotiations and processes.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
24.d		Advocate for the consultation of local women and women's groups within the context of preparations and discussions for peacekeeping and civilian crisis management missions.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
25.a		Improve women's participation in local society.	Encourage the presence of local women within the local judicial system, police and defence.	Interventions carried out.
25.b	Support initiatives focused on enhancing women's participation in the decision-making process at each level (local, regional and national) particularly in countries in fragile situations.		Support for women's participation in peace negotiations.	Development



25.c		Support local women's organisations and networks in enhancing their legal, economic, political and social capacities.	Support provided.	Development
25.d		Encourage local set-ups inserted in civil society to ensure better socio-economic participation by women.	Projects or programmes that contribute to gender equality.	Development

## **OBJECTIVE 5. Support for the implementation of resolution 1325 and the national action plan**

Systematic support is required for the application of resolution 1325. The subject of women, peace and security cannot be ignored, given the harmful consequences that this would have for countless women and girls whose security is threatened by conflict.

Internationally, individual member states of the UN and the international and regional organisations must devote their efforts to creating as wide a foundation as possible for the resolution and its concrete implementation. This is why the NAP provides that Belgium advocates at the international level for the implementation of the resolution and, within this context, lend, where possible, its support to international organisations or individual member states. In this regard, particular attention will be given to the possibility of offering support for the development and implementation of NAPs relating to resolution 1325 in partner countries of the Belgian Development Cooperation.

It is also necessary to distribute information in Belgium and raise awareness, both at decision-making level and executive level. The Belgian population constitutes a third target audience. Application of the resolution and concrete implementation of the NAP must remain the focus of all attention and the support necessary to this effect must be given.

In itself, this NAP constitutes an initial form of support for this subject. Indeed, it draws, in a structural manner, the attention of the administrations to the subject. The remainder of this section explains the lines of action that will be undertaken to garner further support for the resolution and the NAP.

N°	GOAL	LINES OF ACTION	MONITORING INSTRUMENTS	DEPARTMENTS
26.a	Apply resolution 1325 at Belgian federal level and implement the NAP.	Develop a Belgian NAP for application of resolution 1325.	NAP adopted.	Foreign Affairs Development Defence Interior Justice Equality
26.b		Offer support to administrations and strategic units via provision of gender-related expertise.	Expertise offered.	Equality
26.c		Distribute and integrate best practice, recommendations and lessons learned.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Development Defence Interior Justice Equality
27.	Awareness raised amongst the actors concerned and the general Belgian public.	Develop or support awareness-raising actions relating to resolution 1325.	Awareness-raising actions.	Foreign Affairs Development Equality
28.a	Encourage support for the application of resolution 1325 and follow-up resolutions at the international level.	Add a section entitled "Women, Peace and Security" to the questionnaire on the OSCE "Code of Conduct on Politico-Military Aspects of Security".	Section added.	Foreign Affairs
28.b		Support initiatives aimed at keeping the subject of resolution 1325 on the agenda of the OSCE.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
28.c		Cooperate with NATO and support the development and implementation of their action plan and indicators for resolution 1325.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
28.d		Encourage and support the application of resolution 1325 and follow-up resolutions by international and regional organisations.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Development Defence

28.e		Advocate within the EU for an increase in efforts aimed at the implementation of resolution 1325, including within the Common Security and Defence Policy, and assist the EEAS in this task.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs
28.f		Continue to seek the application of resolutions 1325, 1820, 1960, 1888 and 1889 within the context of all peacekeeping missions and all civilian crisis management missions, both during preparation and implementation.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Defence
29.a	Encourage the application of resolution 1325 at partner country level.	Advocate, via diplomacy and development cooperation, for the application of resolution 1325 in countries in fragile situations.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Development
29.b		Encourage partner countries to develop a “resolution 1325 NAP” and support these countries with the effective implementation of this NAP.	Countries that receive support in relation to national action plans or other national policies and instruments used.	Foreign Affairs Development
30.	Support bodies that promote the application of resolution 1325.	Support the work of the NATO Office on Gender Perspectives on resolution 1325.	Interventions carried out.	Foreign Affairs Defence
31.	Enhance application of resolution 1325 on the ground.	Support vertical and/or specific action focused on resolution 1325, by drawing particular attention to vulnerable groups of women.	Projects or programmes that contribute to gender equality in countries in fragile situations.	Development
32.	Enhance application of resolution 1325 by the demands of donors.	Draw attention to the implementation of resolution 1325 when coordinating donors in partner countries and seek greater coordination in the implementation of resolution 1325 alongside existing gender coordination.	Interventions carried out.	Development

## **OBJECTIVE 6. Follow-up, reporting and monitoring**

This National Action Plan, which will cover the period 2013-2016, encompasses many lines of action which should help to improve the position of women in (pre-/post-) conflict zones. Ensuring the implementation of such an ambitious plan over such a period requires monitoring. Objective 6 describes the form that such monitoring will take.

In accordance with the administration's principle of transparency, the executive is also responsible for informing the population (represented primarily by the parliament and civil society) about the actions that are planned and carried out. Reporting to parliament clearly satisfies the requirement referred to in point 2 of resolution 5-665/5 of the Senate Commission on Foreign Relations and National Defence, which provides that the parliament must be kept informed of any progress.

There must also, on the other hand, be regular consultation with external actors, including civil society and local women's organisations, in order to better determine their needs and priorities and secure greater adherence to, amongst other things, peace initiatives proposed by women. Such consultation may result in adjustments or new interpretations of certain lines of action and is part of the continuous pursuit of quality and effectiveness to which the authorities are committed.

For the purposes of reporting and monitoring, one or more monitoring instruments have been associated with each of the lines of action referred to in the plan. In this regard, the UN and EU indicators concerning resolution 1325 have been taken into account. Those connected with actions by UN and EU member states have been added to the monitoring instruments in the matrices. The list of EU indicators is enclosed in annex 4.

Annex 3 provides an assessment for 2012, drawn up based on the lines of action and monitoring instruments presented above. The annual reporting to parliament will follow the same structure. This assessment may therefore serve as a starting measurement and will permit developments in the implementation of the NAP to be tracked thanks to the annual reports. From 2015, these reports will be submitted to parliament at the start of the year and will cover actions carried out during the previous year.

N°	GOAL	LINES OF ACTION	MONITORING INSTRUMENTS	DEPARTMENTS
33.	Inform parliament.	Make an annual report, starting in 2015, on progress achieved for each line of action and monitoring instrument.	Reports sent to parliament.	Equality (coordination) Foreign Affairs Development Defence Interior Justice
34.	Inform and involve civil society.	Ensure the exchange of information, the creation of a network of gender-related expertise available in Belgium, and consultation with civil society, in any case in the middle and at the end of the period covered by the NAP.	Organisation of two reporting and coordination events.	Foreign Affairs (coordination) Development Defence Interior Justice Equality
35.	Involve civil society in partner countries.	Ensure the exchange of information and invite civil society to contribute to monitoring by reporting the elements communicated by the local organisations that are part of their network, particularly the local organisations in Belgian Development Cooperation partner countries.	Invitations and results.	Development
36.	Inform the EU.	Respond to requests for input on monitoring of EU indicators concerning resolution 1325.	Information provided.	Foreign Affairs
37.	Inform the UN.	Respond to requests for input from the Secretariat of the UN concerning resolution 1325.	Information provided.	Foreign Affairs