

Civil Society Advisory Group to the UN on Women, Peace and Security



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Global Open Days for Women and Peace are a First Step In Responding to Women in Conflict Countries

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Mary Robinson, Co-Chair,
Civil Society Advisory Group to the UN on Women, Peace and Security

(June 15, 2010) The Civil Society Advisory Group to the United Nations on Women, Peace and Security (CSAG) expressed support today for the “Global Open Days for Women and Peace,” organized by several UN agencies and departments, to hear directly from women in countries affected by past or ongoing conflict and substantively to incorporate women’s rights and concerns in their mission planning.

Open Day events have been held in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Kosovo, Nepal, Sudan, Somalia and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). In the coming weeks, Open Days will be held in Afghanistan, Haiti, Pakistan, Iraq, Kenya, Côte d’Ivoire, Burundi, and the Office of the UN in West Africa based in Senegal, among others.

Women in these countries have raised key issues with UN representatives of the need to include women in peace and state-building, the requirement that their security be guaranteed, and that impunity for war crimes must not be tolerated.

“Stronger efforts to promote the role of women in peace and security must focus on empowering women to speak for themselves in the development of policies and programs that affect them directly.” said Mary Robinson, co-chair of the Civil Society Advisory Group to the UN on Women, Peace and Security. “Open Days are providing a free and safe space for women’s voices to be heard loud and clear by UN missions across the world. The international community must develop policies that are responsive to the reality of women on the ground.”

“It is vital that such meetings be regularly held in all UN missions, and the recommendations from these consultations be meaningfully incorporated in specific policy decisions,” said Bineta Diop of Femmes Africa Solidarité, co-chair of the Civil Society Advisory Group to the UN on Women, Peace and Security. “The United Nations must lead on women’s empowerment, and can provide real leadership and bring about substantial positive change for women globally by ensuring that these meetings take place throughout the year, and that the issues raised are meaningfully reflected in mission planning and policy.”

By consulting regularly with women’s civil society actors in conflict and post-conflict situations, UN Special Representatives will be able to more effectively discharge their mission mandates: by finding out far more concretely about the particular challenges women face, their specific concerns, and priority areas for action. The year 2010 will see the 10th Anniversary of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and Open Days activities send a clear message that women’s rights are not incidental to peacemaking and peacebuilding efforts, but are central to them.

The Civil Society Advisory Group to the United Nations

The Civil Society Advisory Group to the UN on Women, Peace and Security (CSAG) was established to advise the High-Level Steering Committee of the heads of all relevant United Nations agencies and entities to ensure a coherent and coordinated approach by the UN system to implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The CSAG helps translate policies and resolutions adopted by UN agencies and entities into on-the-ground actions to protect women in the context of armed conflict and empower their full participation in peace processes, post-conflict governance and reconstruction.

The CSAG is co-chaired by Mary Robinson (Ireland) and Bineta Diop (Senegal). Other members are Salim Ahmed Salim (Tanzania), Hina Jilani (Pakistan), Elisabeth Rehn (Finland), Swanee Hunt (United States), Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda (Zimbabwe), Donald Steinberg (United States), Zainab Salbi (Iraq/United States), Thelma Awori (Liberia/Uganda), Sanam Anderlini (Iran/UK), Sharon Bhagwan-Rolls (Fiji), Lakhdar Brahimi (Algeria), and Susana Villarán de la Puente (Peru).