



UN Wants Expanded Role For Women In Peace And Security

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New York, NY (AHN) - More women should be in leadership positions in UN peace operations, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said Wednesday at the end of a Security Council session on women and development.

The 15-member body also expressed deep concern that gender-based violence, particularly rape, remain "pervasive, and in some situations have become systematic," despite calls for the protection of women and girls.

"There is so much left to do," Ban said in reference to UN resolution 1325, the landmark document adopted by the Council in 2000 which stresses the importance of giving women equal participation and full involvement in peace and security matters and the need to increase their role in decision-making.

He recalled the recent appointment of Ambassador Ellen Margrethe Løj of Denmark to serve as his Special Representative for Liberia, one of the UN's biggest peacekeeping missions.

The Secretary-General urged the Council to establish a mechanism dedicated to monitoring violence against women and girls.

He said it was an "encouraging sign" that the Liberian National Police received three times the usual number of female applicants in the month following the deployment of the all-female police contingent from India to the UN mission in that country earlier this year.

Joanne Sandler, acting Executive Director of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), told the Council that using resolution 1325 to meaningfully address sexual violence as a method of warfare is "our greatest collective challenge."

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