



Conflict Related Sexual Violence in Peace Negotiations: Implementing Security Council Resolution 1820

BACKGROUND BRIEFING

WHAT: Briefing for UNCA members on the High-Level Colloquium on “Conflict Related Sexual Violence in Peace Negotiations: Implementing Security Council Resolution 1820”, 22- 24 June

WHEN: 4.00 pm, 18 June, Thursday

WHERE: S- 326, UNCA Club, United Nations Secretariat Building

WHO: Anne Marie Goetz, Senior Advisor, Governance, Peace and Security, UNIFEM

WHY: The Colloquium is being held to coincide with the first anniversary of Security Council resolution 1820 and will address one of the most neglected aspects of conflict resolution: how to address conflict related sexual violence in peace processes and peace negotiations (background information below). It intends to generate practical guidance for mediators to encourage parties to peace talks to address sexual violence. The meeting will convene high-level experts including Jan Egeland, Ian Martin, Major General Patrick Cammaert, Leila Zerrougui, Luz Mendez, Denis Mukwege, Shobha Gautam, Leymah Gbowee and others.

Press conference on Wednesday 24 June, 11.15 am, S-226 (webcast: www.un.org/webcast)

Interviews with peace negotiators and experts are available.

For full details of the Colloquium and participants lists, please visit www.unifem.org and www.stoprapenow.org

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BACKGROUND INFORMATION

For women in today's civil wars, often the war is not over when it is over. Sexual violence has become a method of fighting in modern war, with devastating impact on women and their communities. Failure to address sexual violence in the peace processes, to treat it as a war crime and prosecute it means that it spills over into peace time, with countries like Liberia and the Democratic Republic of Congo currently experiencing an epidemic of rape. Addressing sexual violence in peace processes is a way of signaling that sexual violence is unacceptable in the post-conflict era. Yet it has been absent from peace accords for a number of reasons, not least because so few women participate in peace talks. In 2008, the UN Security Council acknowledged the use of sexual violence in conflict as a deliberate tactic of war.

- UNIFEM research shows that, since the end of the Cold War, and out of approximately **300** peace agreements examined in 45 conflicts, only **10** peace processes have even mentioned sexual violence (Uganda, Darfur, Nepal, Indonesia/Aceh, Sudan/Nuba Mountains, Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo, Philippines, Chiapas, Guatemala).
- In a review of **22** peace processes since 1992, women have averaged just over **7.5%** of negotiators and fewer than **2%** of mediators – with the highest levels of representation being prior to 2000 in the peace processes for El Salvador and Guatemala.
- In ceasefires, sexual violence has not in the past been monitored effectively or treated as an act that would breach the ceasefire.

The challenges of addressing this issue in peace processes will be discussed at the Colloquium of high-level mediators, experts, and peace activists. The meeting is timed to contribute to discussions on the upcoming UN Secretary-General's Report on the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1820.