



**ESTONIA'S ACTION PLAN  
FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325  
ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY  
IN ESTONIA 2015-2019**

**1. Introduction**

In October 2000 the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1325 on women, peace and security and set a goal that the international community must at all times consider the gender perspective in conflict resolution. Estonia supports the implementation of resolution 1325 and is a co-sponsor of its follow-up resolutions 1820, 1888 and 2242. In 2010, Estonia adopted its first action plan for the implementation of the resolution in 2010-2014.

Although numerous advances in ensuring human rights of women have been made since the adoption of the resolution, it is clear that changing attitudes and principles constitutes a long-term process. Therefore, it is essential that countries continue to work actively with women, peace and security agenda.

Estonia's second action plan focuses on improving the situation of women both in conflict and post-conflict areas, raising awareness, and enhancing co-operation and information exchange. Preparation of the action plan was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Defence and the Defence Forces, the Defence League, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, the Police and Boarder Guard Board, and representatives of civil society organisations.

**2. UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Role of Women in Ensuring Peace and Security**

In October 2000, the UN Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 1325. This was the first time the Security Council adopted a resolution acknowledging the disproportionately harmful impact of an armed conflict on women and children. The Security Council set a goal that the international community must at all times adopt a gender perspective in conflict resolution.

The resolution was born out of a worrisome realisation that as a result of the changing nature of military conflicts, most conflict victims are civilians. Women are in a particularly poor situation, as conflicts increase gender-based and sexual violence and restrict women's access to health care, education and economic and political activities.

The Security Council set a task for itself, for the entire UN system, for other international organisations, for member states as well as for all parties to armed conflicts to change the situation. The resolution comprises of four pillars of implementation:

- prevention of gender-based violence and raising awareness in conflict prevention;
- protection of women and girls, including advancement of health and well-being;
- participation of women in peace processes and decision making both at local and UN level;
- taking into account the special needs of women and girls and gender perspective when giving aid. The objective is to incorporate gender perspective into relief and recovery efforts, increase the role of women in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction, and protect women in armed conflicts against gender-based violence, including sexual violence.

Although this autumn marks the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the resolution, the UN as well as the member states are far from achieving set goals. Women and girls are still involved in armed conflicts with disproportionately harmful impact and international efforts to include the gender perspective in conflict resolution is often still in its early stages. The slow changes are not an indication that the topic has lost its significance over time but foremost demonstrate the fact that changing social norms, including the eradication of stereotypes, is a long-term process. Both international organisations and individual states have taken measures to improve women's situation in conflicts.

During the 15 years, the Security Council has adopted seven follow-up resolutions to reinforce the role of women in ensuring peace and security.

- Resolution 1820 (2008) condemns sexual violence as a weapon of war and declares rape and other forms of sexual violence as war crimes.
- Resolution 1888 (2009) mandates peacekeeping missions to prevent and respond to sexual violence in armed conflict, and establishes the position of the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict.
- Resolution 1889 (2009) on increasing women's participation in peace processes.
- Resolution 1960 (2010) focuses on ending impunity for sexual violence in armed conflict.
- Resolution 2106 (2013) recognises that sexual violence in conflict can also affect men and boys as well as the whole community.

- Resolution 2122 (2013) reaffirms the Security Council's commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325.
- Resolution 2242 (2015) focuses on the changed security situation and refers to a number of recommendations made on the basis of the global study; the Security Council promises to integrate resolution 1325 more into its daily work.

54 countries across the world have adopted national action plans to implement resolution 1325 and the number of such countries has increased year by year. Approximately one fifth of them have adopted their second or even third action plan, attesting that women, peace and security continue to be an important topic, and that the parties involved are willing to undertake long-term commitment to achieve desired solutions. At large national action plans can be divided into two groups, depending on whether or not the country itself is involved in a crisis:

- 1) Action plans that contain internal measures (e.g. involvement of women in the decision-making process, combating gender-based violence);
- 2) Action plans that contain external measures (e.g. development co-operation, humanitarian assistance, peacekeeping).

Estonian action plan belongs in the second group as activities aimed at ensuring human rights of women (e.g. promoting gender equality, prevention and stopping of gender-based violence) on a national level are included in other strategic documents.

Besides the UN and member states several international and regional organisations, including the European Union (EU), the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) engage themselves actively with women, peace and security matters.

In 2015 the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) conducted a global study to find out how resolution 1325 is being implemented in different parts of the world and to propose possible solutions how to better achieve the set goals. Estonia as an active supporter of the establishment of UN Women and a champion of resolution 1325 supported the conduction of the study both financially as well as by providing information.<sup>1</sup>

### **3. Estonia's First Action Plan for the Implementation of Resolution 1325 in 2010-2014: Objectives and Results**

In 2010, Estonia adopted its first national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 in Estonia in 2010-2014 with the objective to determine and systematize Estonia's activities that incorporate gender perspective in international missions and development assistance and raise awareness in the society. The topic of women, peace and security falls within the competence of several ministries and

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<sup>1</sup> Information and results of the global study: <http://wps.unwomen.org/en>.

the action plan was prepared in co-operation and led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The action plan had four priorities:

- political and diplomatic activities in international organisations;
- bilateral and multilateral development co-operation, and humanitarian assistance to improve the situation of women in post-conflict situations;
- increase of the number of gender experts and their training; and raising awareness of women, peace and security in institutions dealing with peace and security;
- expansion of women's opportunities to participate in international military and civil operations and increase of the representation of women in international positions related to the maintenance of peace and security.

Estonia was an active speaker on the topic of women, peace and security on international fora, and also witnessed a growth in awareness on national level. During the entire course of the action plan, Estonia supported development co-operation projects that involved fully or partially the situation of women and children or gender equality. In addition, most development co-operation projects bring about an increase in women's awareness, self-help skills and other knowledge. Civil society organisations played a major role in implementing the development co-operation projects, and the work done also delivered visible results. Whenever possible, the gender aspect was always adopted in granting humanitarian assistance and support to the alleviation of the situation of women and children constituted nearly 95% of the amounts granted.<sup>2</sup>

One of the achievements of the implementation of the action plan on national level in Estonia was creating the opportunity for women to participate on equal footing with men in conscript service in 2013. Uniform conscript service ensures an equal starting level for all members of the Defence Forces, equal opportunities to show their strengths and abilities and progress later on in their military career.

Implementation of the action plan confirmed the fact that objectives of resolution 1325 cannot be achieved in a short period of time. For Estonia to help women in conflict areas and for women to be more included in Estonia as well as abroad, it is of utmost importance to raise awareness of the role of women in ensuring peace and security. It is a long-term process that is currently underway. Without doubt, much remains to be done as bringing new values and skills into society and eradicating stereotypes takes time. Continuation of initiatives and projects both on

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<sup>2</sup> A detailed overview of Estonia's development co-operation and humanitarian aid contribution is available on the homepage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <http://www.vm.ee/en/taxonomy/term/55>.

Development co-operation related information is available from the Estonia Development Co-operation Database: <https://rakendusd.vm.ee/akta/index.php?language=eng>.

Overviews of projects related to Resolution 1325 are provided in annual reports, available on the homepage of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: <http://www.vm.ee/en/gender-perspective-conflict-situations-un-security-council-resolution-1325>.

national as well international level constitutes one of the reasons why a new action plan must be adopted.

Secondly, it was concluded that in order to successfully achieve the set goals the co-operation both internally between different government agencies and the civil society as well as internationally on multilateral and bilateral level is of utmost importance.

#### 4. Objectives and Principles of Compiling the Action Plan 2015-2019

By adopting Resolution 1325, the Security Council set a goal that in order to be more efficient in conflict resolution the international community must at all times adopt a gender perspective. This presumes a common understanding both on national as well as international level that conflicts have a disproportionately harmful impact on women and girls. At the same time it is important that women are seen not only as victims but are involved in conflict resolution. Although a number of advances in ensuring human rights of women have been made since the adoption of the resolution, it is clear that changing attitudes and principles constitutes a long-term process.

Based on the objectives of resolution 1325, the Estonian action plan has three main objectives. First, through multilateral and bilateral development co-operation and humanitarian assistance, **improve the situation of women in conflict areas** as well as post-conflict areas, focusing on education and empowerment of women and by that establishing greater opportunities for the involvement of women in peace processes in their own community.

Second, **raise awareness** of the impact of conflicts on women as well as of women's role in ensuring peace and security; and the participation of women in conflict resolution and decision-making processes. Measures to increase awareness are taken both internally and abroad, both on diplomatic as well as grass-roots level.

Third, **enhance co-operation and information exchange** on national and international level.

The compilation of the action plan was led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, involving representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Defence and the Defence Forces, the Defence League, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, the Police and Boarder Guard Board and representatives of civil society organisations.

The following principles have served as a basis for compiling the action plan:

- to continue the activities initiated with the previous action plan as the relevant processes are of long-term nature;

- to focus on areas in which Estonia will be able to implement the objectives of resolution 1325 using the existing means;
- to phrase the activities in a more general manner so to enable competent authorities to carry out specific actions while taking into account requirements specific to their field, considering budget and other related documents.

## 5. Measures for Implementing Resolution 1325 in 2015-2019

Measures for implementing resolution 1325 in 2015-2019 were agreed upon during discussions between representatives of civil society organisations next to representatives of ministries and other government agencies. Within their respective competence, the action plan will be implemented by the Ministry of Education and Research (MER), the Ministry of Defence (MD), the Ministry of the Interior (MI), the Ministry of Social Affairs (MSA), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), the Defence League (DL), and the *Naiskodukaitse* (Women's Voluntary Defence Organization; NKK) that engage in close co-operation with civil society organisations, institutions of higher education, and research institutions. Broad-based collaboration ensures the best possible implementation of the action plan. Often, it is civil society organisations that have experience and information gained on the ground in developing countries and conflict areas that help plan activities to support securing human rights of women and empower women in developing countries and conflict areas.

Planned measures are divided into five subject-specific groups:

- 1) supporting and ensuring human rights of women and empowerment of women in conflict areas and post-conflict areas;
- 2) co-operation, information exchange and raising awareness at the international level;
- 3) raising awareness at the national level;
- 4) participation of women in positions related to peace and security in Estonia;
- 5) enhancement of co-operation and information exchange in Estonia.

### 5.1. Supporting and Ensuring Human Rights of Women and Empowerment of Women in Conflict Areas and Post-conflict Areas

Estonia has been supporting development co-operation projects that fully or partially address the situation of women and children or gender equality during the period of the last action plan, and is planning to continue doing so. Majority of development co-operation projects bring about an increase in women's awareness, self-help skills, and other knowledge. An important tool in empowering women and ensuring their greater involvement is education as well as rapidly developing information and communication technologies that provide new and improved opportunities. There is a strong connection between quality education and overall economic well-being, empowerment and involvement of women. Estonia adopts a

gender perspective also in humanitarian assistance projects, and support to the alleviation of the situation of women and children makes up 95% of the total amount granted to humanitarian assistance.

<b>Measure</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Within the framework of multilateral development co-operation and humanitarian assistance making voluntary contributions to organisations actively engaged in the promotion and protection of the rights and situation of women and girls; support the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the work of UN Women.	Making contributions; the share of the contributions in development co-operation and humanitarian assistance.	MFA
Ensuring that gender perspective is considered and taken into account when planning and implementing development co-operation projects.	Carrying out development co-operation projects that have an impact on the situation of women and children; project descriptions.	MFA in co-operation with civil society organisations
Within the framework of development co-operation first and foremost supporting projects aimed at enhancing the access to education, health care, including information on sexual and reproductive health, and elimination of gender based violence.	Carrying out development co-operation projects that have an impact on the situation of women and children; project descriptions.	MFA in co-operation with civil society organisations
Paying special attention to	The share of humanitarian	MFA in co-

the needs of women and girls as well as gender based violence in humanitarian assistance projects.	assistance projects targeted at the situation of women and girls in total humanitarian assistance granted.	operation with civil society organisations
Supporting the rebuilding of judicial systems of developing and post-conflict countries in order to ensure the rule of law and the protection of human rights, including human rights of women.	Support to domain-specific training courses for <i>inter alia</i> national officials, judges, prosecutors and the police. Participation in development co-operation and twinning projects.	MER, MD, MI, MSA, MFA in co-operation with civil society organisations
Supporting the participation of women and women's organisations in policymaking and in peace and security processes.	Co-operation projects that support the involvement of women in developing, conflict, and post-conflict countries.	MFA in co-operation with civil society organisations

## 5.2. Co-operation, Information Exchange and Raising Awareness at the International level

As of September 2015, a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 has been adopted by 54 countries; a number of international and regional organisations, including NATO and the EU, also have their own action plans or implementation plans. UN Women is actively addressing the topic.

Regardless of the fact that an ever increasing number of countries and organisations emphasise the role of women in ensuring peace and security, women are not involved in peace processes and sexual crimes committed in conflict situations remain a serious issue. On the one hand, this requires an increase of the awareness of the entire international community, and on the other hand, an efficient and close co-operation between countries that aim to achieve the goals set in resolution 1325.

Measure	Indicator	Responsibility
Monitoring and supporting in the EU and international organisations, in which Estonia is a member state, the implementation of international human rights agreements, including those concerning human rights of women.	Taking part in events, voicing of opinions, speeches, participation in the development of related documents and contributing to the reviews.	MFA, MSA in co-operation with civil society organisations



Supporting gender mainstreaming and promoting the strengthening of adherence to that perspective in the EU and international organisations in which Estonia is a member state.	Active participation in the development of thematic documents.	MFA, MD, MSA in co-operation with civil society organisations
Supporting the inclusion of the gender perspective in the mandate, implementation and evaluation of the military and civil missions of the EU, NATO and the UN.	Active participation in the development of thematic documents.	MFA, MD
Including topics related to the situation of human rights of women and women, peace and security in the agenda of appropriate bilateral meetings with donor countries as well as with states emerging from conflict.	Raising the topic in bilateral meetings	MFA
Supporting the establishment of the position of a gender equality advisor in new military missions and involving gender experts in international military and civil missions.	Participation of gender equality advisors and gender experts in missions.	MD, MI, MFA
Thematic co-operation and information exchange on political and diplomatic level with other countries that have adopted a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 and/or are working towards that end; co-ordinating activities at the international level.	Thematic meetings and information exchange.	MFA, MD

### 5.3. Raising Awareness at the National Level

Resolution 1325 is part of a larger approach aimed at ensuring human rights of women and therefore it is important that the topic is widely discussed in the society as whole, including areas where there are no conflicts. Proceeding from that, Estonia's thematic activities are directed at various target groups such as schoolchildren, representatives of civil society organisations, officials, conscripts, and mission personnel. For the purposes of organising training sessions and distributing information, suitable study and information materials are required. The set objective is to provide the participants of training and awareness raising events with versatile knowledge and skills in order to be able to identify the connection between human rights, including human rights of women, and humanitarian law. In order to make sure that awareness raising efforts are not only unilateral, it is important to co-operate with academic educational institutions and involve students in higher education in researching topics related to women, peace, and security.

Measure	Indicator	Responsibility
Training officials and representatives of civil society organisations in gender based violence topics; human rights of women; women, peace and security; and gender equality.	Information and awareness raising events and training sessions for relevant officials involved in the topic; number of participants at the events.	MFA, MD, MSA in co-operation with civil society organisations, institutions of higher education, and research institutions
Training experts engaged in peace and security related issues in gender based violence topics, human rights of women, and gender equality.	Information of awareness raising events and training sessions; number of participants at the events.	MFA, MD, MI, MSA in co-operation with civil society organisations, institutions of higher education, and research institutions
Addressing gender based violence, human rights of women and women's role in ensuring peace and security and gender equality in the general training for officers and non-commissioned officers.	Training sessions of officers and non-commissioned officers include a thematic study module on gender equality, human rights of women, the role of women in ensuring peace and security.	MD, MI, MSA in co-operation with civil society organisations, institutions of higher education, and research institutions
Addressing gender based violence, human rights of	Pre-deployment training programmes include a	MD, MI, MSA in co-operation with

women and women's role in ensuring peace and security and gender equality in the pre-deployment training.	thematic study module on gender equality, human rights of women, the role of women in ensuring peace and security.	civil society organisations, institutions of higher education, and research institutions
Addressing gender based violence, human rights of women and women's role in ensuring peace and security and gender equality in basic training sessions for soldiers.	Training programmes include a thematic study module on gender equality, human rights of women, the role of women in ensuring peace and security.	MD, MSA in co-operation with civil society organisations, institutions of higher education, and research institutions
Addressing gender based violence, human rights of women and women's role in ensuring peace and security and gender equality in the basic school and upper secondary school curriculum of Social Studies and/or National Defence. Facilitating the implementation of curricula, including general part of the curricula.	Inclusion of relevant subjects in the curricula or description of the study process. Compilation of suitable study materials.	ME, MD, MSA in co-operation with civil society organisations
Addressing gender based violence, human rights of women and women's role in ensuring peace and security and gender equality in training sessions of civil representatives engaged in conflict or post-conflict areas.	Inclusion of relevant subjects in pre-deployment and pre-rotation training sessions. Number of trained representatives.	MSA, MFA in co-operation with civil society organisations
Compiling and distributing study and information materials on women, peace and security.	Electronic and/or hard copy study and information materials intended for various target groups.	ME, MD, MI, MSA, MFA in co-operation with civil society organisations
Identifying topics related to women, peace and security that have insufficient information, and engaging	Meetings with representatives of educational institutions, information exchange,	ME, MD, MSA, MFA in co-operation with civil society

in co-operation with academic educational institutions in order to research the role of women in ensuring peace and security.	research.	organisations, institutions of higher education, and research institutions
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#### 5.4. Participation of Women in Positions Related to Peace and Security in Estonia

The legislation of Estonia provides equal opportunities for men and women to work and run for security related positions; however, the percentage of women in such positions remains modest. One of the goals of resolution 1325 is greater participation of women in security and peace processes.

Measure	Indicator	Responsibility
Ensuring gender balance in competitions for peace and security related positions.	Recruitment and promotion principles proceed from the principle of gender equality and the obligation to promote it.	MD, MI, MFA
Continue to introduce opportunities for women to enlist and progress in conscript service and to join active service and voluntary national defence organisations.	Organizing campaigns, media coverage, participation in career fairs and other thematic events.	MD, DL, NKK

#### 5.5. Enhancement of Co-operation and Information Exchange in Estonia

Achievement of goals set in the action plan falls within the competence of a number of institutions, and is partially undertaken in co-operation with civil society organisations. Therefore, it is important to exchange information and experiences efficiently.

Measure	Indicator	Executor
Engaging in thematic co-operation and regular information exchange with competent institutions and experts.	Thematic meetings and information exchange.	MER, MD, MI, MSA, MFA
Engaging in regular co-operation with civil society organisations, exchange information and	Thematic meetings and information exchange.	MER, MD, MI, MSA, MFA in co-operation with civil society

experience.		organisations
Public distribution of information related to women, peace, and security online and via e-mail.	Distribution of information primarily concerning measures taken in Estonia on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; administration of a thematic mailing list.	MFA in co-operation with other institutions and civil society organisations

## 6. Implementation and Reporting

The action plan is implemented by the institutions listed above within their competence, including sub-agencies if needed, and co-operating with civil society organisations, institutions of higher education and research institutions. The action plan is compiled for years 2015–2019 and the implementing institutions and civil society organisations will submit a written overview of their corresponding activities in the second half of 2017 and the second half of 2019. Based on the overviews, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs prepares implementing reports. The action plan and implementing reports will be submitted to the Government of the Republic for information.

While the action plan is in force, the competent institutions will continuously exchange information related to implementation of resolution 1325 and will engage in comprehensive co-operation to achieve the objectives of the action plan. The implementers of the action plan will meet at least once a year. If required, the authors of the action plan will revise the plan, taking into account changes in international context, including the measures taken by the EU, NATO and the UN in implementing resolution 1325, Estonia's foreign policy objectives, and other circumstances.

Planned measures will be carried out within the existing budgetary means.