

United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste



The Special Representative of the Secretary-General

OPEN DAY DIALOGUE WITH CIVIL SOCIETY ON UNSCR 1325

Dili 11 JUNE 2010

THEME : PARTNERSHIPS FOR PEACE

Excellencies,

Members of the Government, Parliament and Church

Friends

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted that all of you accepted my invitation to participate in this open dialogue to mark the 10th anniversary of the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. The United Nations Secretary General remarked that this anniversary gives us an opportunity to reaffirm the core message that “sustainable peace is possible only with women’s full participation, their perspectives, their leadership, their daily, equal presence wherever we seek to make and keep the peace.”

Resolution 1325 sets out three fundamental principles: 1) participation of women in peacebuilding; 2) protection of women and girls from sexual and gender based violence through the adoption of prevention measures and 3) the promotion of women's human rights with an emphasis on promoting gender equality and empowerment strategies.

To use again the words of the UN Secretary General, "Progress has indeed been achieved. Many peace processes now regularly include consultations with women's peace groups. In many post-conflict countries, the number of women in government has increased dramatically, and they have used their public decision-making roles to advance women's rights.... But the gaps remain significant: too few women participate in peacemaking and peacebuilding, and we have seen a disturbing escalation in levels of sexual violence during and after conflict.

Open dialogues are taking place this week in all the peacekeeping missions around the world, so that we can discuss what successes we have had globally in enhancing the role of women in peacemaking and peacebuilding. In October, the Security Council will meet to debate the implementation of the resolution by all Member States. I trust that ideas and lessons learnt from Timor-Leste will be very valuable for the debate.

Very important work has been undertaken in Timor-Leste on all fronts to engage and promote women in peacebuilding and decision making, to protect them from sexual and gender-based violence and to promote gender equality. A lot has been achieved, and we will talk more about the successes and challenges during the course of this dialogue. I will cite just a few examples.

On Wednesday (9 June), I participated in a similar open dialogue in Suai, which was a very useful opportunity to learn first hand what are the experiences and concerns of the women in the districts. Effective partnerships have been formed in Suai between the PNTL, the NGOs and the community to provide better security and peace for women, through addressing sexual and gender based violence.

The work of women peace builders at the community level, networking and building enduring partnerships is an important contribution to sustainable peace and security and will make a meaningful difference to all women.

Today, three women who have demonstrated leadership in building peace in their communities will tell you more about the dialogue in Suai. I take this opportunity to salute again the suco chefe of Maudemo, Maria Fatima, Madre Mafalda and PNTL Officer Amelia de Jesus Amaral.

Throughout the country, extensive training has been provided by local civil society organizations to women on mediation and conciliation, to enable them to work at the community level as agents of peace.

Important milestones have been achieved in fighting the plague of sexual and gender based violence, such as the adoption of the penal code making domestic violence a public crime and the adoption of the law against domestic violence this past May.

The Government of Timor-Leste has also demonstrated its commitment, among other things, by engaging in trilateral consultation and cross-learning with Ireland and Liberia on the implementation of resolution 1325. These consultations allowed for civil society participation, which is the way to move forward on forming effective partnerships for peace.

There is much more to be done given the vast scale of needs. More efforts will have to be devoted to overcoming the challenges relating to equal access to resources, socio-economic development for all and access to justice, to name a few. I hope today's open dialogue will reinvigorate our efforts to realize the vision set out in resolution 1325, and I look forward to hearing from you how we can proceed in the coming years to build peace and security for the women of Timor-Leste, and *with* the women of Timor-Leste .

Thank you. Obrigada barak.