

3. Interaction Program On Women Conflict and Security : Understanding and Implementing Resolution 1325 in Nepal "

Background: UN Security Council - Resolution 1325

In October 2000, the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security; urging its member states to ensure the full inclusion of women in all aspects of international peace and security processes. It is the most comprehensive UN resolution to date on the role of women in peace-building activities.

Resolution 1325 recognizes that those most negatively affected by war and conflict are civilians—particularly women and children—and acknowledges that this is a threat to peace and security. The resolution also acknowledges the critical role women can play in preventing and resolving conflicts and in building peace. The resolution not only calls for action within the UN but also urges all parties involved in conflict resolution to adopt a gender-conscious approach during disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. The policy statement stresses the responsibility of all actors to protect women from gender-based violence, especially rape, and to prosecute those guilty of perpetrating such crimes. It also calls for the support of women-led peace initiatives and indigenous approaches to conflict resolution. It calls for increasing the role of women in decision-making in regard to conflict prevention and resolution at all levels: national, regional, and international. Not merely focusing on the protection of women and children, it reaffirms the important role of women in peace building.

In the present context when the country is afflicted by conflict Sancharika Samuha is devoted to work for peace and conflict resolution in Nepal. It believes that in a world of continuing instability and violence, the implementation of cooperative approaches to peace and security is urgently needed. The equal access and full participation of women in power structures and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. It believes that the involvement of women in preventing, managing and resolving conflicts and in all peace building measures is very essential.

It is with this objective that Sancharika Samuha in partnership with SAP Nepal and IMPACS organized a half-day interaction program with educators, policy makers, decision makers, social and human right activists and practitioners of the media sector as well as representatives from the organizations working on issue of women, security, conflict and human rights. The focus of the workshop was to enhance knowledge about the Resolution 1325, to assess the relevance of the Resolution 1325 in Nepal and to come up with strategies for its implementation.

Inaugural Session

Chief Guest of the program State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Prakash Saharam Mahat highlighted the importance of UN Resolution 1325 in the present situation of the country. He noted that the participation of women from grassroots level is a must to restore lasting peace in the country. Highlighting

the importance of UN Resolution 1325 in the present situation of the country, he stressed on the participation of women from the grassroots level, who have been suffering most due to the conflict, should be included in the peace building process.

Dr. Aarzu Deuba, President, Samanata, stressed on the need of woman member in the High Level Peace Committee (HLPC), flaying the government's failure in making women's participation in the HLPC, recently formed to initiate negotiation with Maoists, when women are the ones mostly suffering due to the Maoist conflict. She also said that the women's equal participation is a must for lasting peace in the country. She stressed to give chance for women to come into the forefront of the peace building process. In this context she added that it might not be that the men always malfunction regarding women's participation, but they may not have felt the importance of women's participation. So, she compel to be united and pressurize the government to give women a chance.

Faruq Faisal Director, Nepal Media and Democratic Strengthening Project, IMPACS enlightened about the UN resolution 1325 as it is a unique tool which would benefit a lot in future projects if it is implemented properly. He stressed on the resolution as the core of our understanding and push it forward to mobilize the civil societies through the grassroots level, regional level and national level.

Mobina S.B Jaffer, Senator, Canada, during her live phone address from Canada, said that the UN resolution 1325 is one of the tools for Nepal to provide security to the conflict-hit women and children. In this regard, she added that the UN resolution 1325, which advocates women's role in peace making process, is a must. She also noted that Canadian Committee are encouraging different countries to follow their lead to form such committee in which women are included in peace building process.

Ambassador of Canada, Lucie Edwards shed light on the importance of UN Resolution 1325. She noted how the resolution is a very powerful as it gives us the tool to advance the interested women not only in the conflict situation but also in peace building process. She also added that it talks about general conflict hit people which will help Nepal during peace process.

President of Sancharika Samuha (SAS), Bandana Rana chaired the program and highlighted on Conflict and Security: Understanding and Implementing Resolution 1325 in Nepal. She shed light on Understanding United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and the objective of the interaction program. In her remarks, she stressed that being a member state, Nepal is compelled to follow UN Resolution 1325.

Interactive Session

Moderator of the interactive session, Bandana Rana made a presentation elaborating on following points on Understanding United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and implementing it in Nepal.

- History
- Founding Documents of UNSC Resolution 1325
- Why is Resolution 1325 Important?
- Key Commitments Made in 1325
 - Gender Parity at All Levels of Decision-Making
 - Gender Perspective in Peacekeeping
 - Protection of and Respect for Human Rights of Women and Girls
 - Gender Perspective in Post-Conflict Processes
 - Gender Perspective in SG Reports and in SC Missions
- Who has to implement 1325?
- The Impact of the Conflict on Nepalese Women:
- How can we use Resolution 1325?

She noted that as a conscientious citizens we need to monitor and ensure that the government and conflicting parties.

Discussants

In the discussion program Syham Sundar Sharma, Joint Secretary- MWCSW, Shobha Shrestha from SAP-Nepal, Bishnu Pukar Shrestha from Citizen Peace Committee, Lily Thapa from Single Women Forum, Malla K Sundar a Human Rights Activist, Sharada Pokharel Former MP and Indu Tuladhar stated that the Resolution 1325 must be implemented in the villages from the grassroots level. The Resolution 1325 enforces that in the situation of conflict also the need for respect of women and children rights, their security, women participation in peace building process and gender awareness training to the personnel of all who are involved in peace process.

Open Floor Discussion

During the discussion the participants identified the following strategies for the success of understanding and implementation of Resolution 1325 in Nepal.

1. Children issues must be included with the women issues as they are affected from the conflict as well.
2. High priority should be given to the women presence and participation in the government level where decisions for policy making takes place.
3. All those INGOs and NGOs whom are involved in this sector should be brought together and request government to implement it.
4. Res 1325 could play a role of bridge to compete with various problems in the country such as, lack of separate prison for women, rape and forced pregnancy, kidnapping, etc.
5. Government should build up networking to influence Resolution 1325.
6. Victims should also be included in the commission as far as possible.
7. Sancharika should go ahead in a consolidated manner to represent all NGOs.
8. More emphasis is given to the negative aspect and women are projected as victims only.
9. It is important to document/ address it, recognise and capitalize both in the current as well as post conflict situation.
10. Create more international pressure for a resolution.
11. This committee and its positive outcome would be a model for other countries (around the world). Nepal could become a leader and expert in participatory peace building.
12. Proposal of women committee for peace building needs to be supported strongly.
13. Skill development of women in peace process.
14. Gender analysis of peace documents.
15. Gender training for army, police personnel.
16. Monitoring and campaign against gender based violence.
17. Bring voices of grassroots women to peace process.

