



**Statement of Mari Simonen  
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Women: Stabilizing an Insecure World  
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UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, praises the European Commission for organizing this important conference on “Women: Stabilizing an Insecure World,” on the eve of International Women’s Day.

The quest for gender equality lies at the heart of the United Nations Charter, which proclaims the equal rights of men and women. Today we understand more than ever that the empowerment of women is fundamental to the goals for which the United Nations was founded—peace and security, improved living standards and respect for human rights.

The fight for women’s human rights is one of the most important social movements of our time. To make greater progress, increased investments are needed to improve the health and education of women and girls, and to enforce the legal protection of their rights. Today the insecurity faced by millions of women prevents them from fully contributing to national and global security.

UNFPA, the United Nations Population Fund, works with governments and civil society to advance the empowerment of women and gender equality and to guarantee the right to sexual and reproductive health. We are proud to join the United Nations Secretary-General in his new campaign to end violence against women. We support his call for a monitoring mechanism in the UN Security Council to measure progress in addressing violence against women in conflict and post-conflict situations. We join nine other UN agencies in our commitment to end female genital mutilation within the next generation.

UNFPA has been in the forefront of implementing Security Council Resolution 1325, working with partners to ensure women’s protection during conflict, and their participation in peace processes. We have organized several capacity-building sessions for representatives from more than 40 conflict and post-conflict countries. We have worked in Afghanistan, Iraq, Indonesia, East Timor and Nepal to develop national action plans to ensure women’s participation in reconciliation and national reconstruction. Plans are now underway with the African Union and other bodies to advance the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 throughout several regions.

UNFPA calls for increased investments in girls’ education, women’s empowerment, the elimination of violence against women, and sexual and reproductive health. We call for full implementation of the Brussels Call to Action to end sexual violence in conflicts and beyond.

We pledge to work together with committed governments, groups and individuals to create a more secure world.