



Women in Black  
London

# End Immunity for UN/NATO Peace-keepers

**In October 2000, the UN passed Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. It aimed to protect women and girls – during conflict and afterwards, to recognize women’s rights and identify gender-specific crimes in order to protect women and girls from rape and other forms of sexual exploitation. The UN also aimed to end impunity for these crimes.**

**Rape and sexual exploitation:** Since 1995 there have been repeated reports that UN peace-keepers have raped and sexually exploited women and girls in countries where UN forces are deployed to protect civilians. The first cases were reported in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1995 and in the Democratic Republic of Congo from 1999. By 2012, there were reports of sexual exploitation from across 10 UN peacekeeping missions. Few of these reports were properly investigated; many were covered up. Where investigations took place, peacekeepers were sent home, not prosecuted.

**UN Immunity from Prosecution:** All UN Staff, contractors and other civilian members of UN peacekeeping missions enjoy immunity from prosecution. Although this immunity can – and has been – lifted, very few peacekeepers responsible for sexual exploitation have been tried and prosecuted; in some cases, there will only be an internal disciplinary inquiry, and most cases no action will be taken.

**NATO and 1325:** In 2007 NATO agreed that their member states - including the UK - should adopt National Action Plans on implementing 1325, through providing training on the status of women in war and post war situations, human rights and international law, the prevention of sexual violence and trafficking, and good conduct.

**Impunity for rape and sexual exploitation:** Despite Resolution 1325, 19 years later, women and girls in conflict or post-conflict zones are still raped, sexually assaulted, trafficked or sexually exploited in some way by the very people who were put there to protect them. This means impunity for UN Peacekeepers.

**Please sign and send this letter to the Secretary of State for Defence**

**To: Secretary of State for Defence, Michael Fallon, MP, Ministry of Defence, Whitehall, London, SW1A 2HB**

I call on the British government to:

- Fully implement Security Council Resolution 1325 with respect to the protection of women and girls from rape and sexual exploitation;
- Ensure that all military personnel on UN or NATO missions are trained in their responsibilities and obligations under UNSC 1235;
- Ensure that all military personnel on UN or NATO suspected of rape or sexual exploitation are subject to criminal investigation and – where evidence exists – prosecution.

Signature.....Name.....Date.....

Address.....

**Women in Black, C/o The Maypole Fund, PO Box 14072, London N16 5WB  
Donations for leaflets etc most welcome. [www.womeninblack.org.uk](http://www.womeninblack.org.uk)**

Women in Black holds vigils every Wednesday between 6-7 pm at the Edith Cavell Statue, opposite the National Portrait Gallery, St. Martin’s Place, London, WC2. The vigils are silent, women-only and if possible we wear black.