

Senate Human Rights Committee
Speaking notes for Jennifer Salahub, The North-South Institute

Hello and thank you very much for this opportunity to speak to you today. My name is Jennifer Salahub. I'm a Researcher with the Peacebuilding and Conflict Prevention team at The North-South Institute, an independent think tank based here in Ottawa. Together with partners in Southern countries, I conduct policy-relevant research at the nexus of security, development and gender.

I'm going to focus my comments today on the evidence that comes out of NSI's work related to 1325. I realize my time is limited, so I'll move through my prepared comments quickly to allow more time for questions. I would, of course, be happy to come back in the future to discuss these matters further.

NSI's recent work has focused on sustainable peacebuilding, security sector reform – in particular policing – and gender-equal access to justice. Within these themes, I think there are four main lessons from our work for Canada's implementation of 1325.

1. In places like Haiti, Canada has been doing great work and seeing promising results in promoting gender equality through its dedicated gender funds, such as the Fonds Kore Famn. As well, CIDA has been a global leader in developing tools for mainstreaming gender throughout its programming. However, neither strategy is sufficient. Particularly in conflict affected states, Canada should promote gender mainstreaming, support civil society organizations working to protect women's human rights, as well as establish specific gender funds to support programs aimed at ending violence against women and increasing women's political participation.

2. In places like Southern Sudan and Burundi, security forces like the police are often seen primarily as threats by local populations – particularly women and girls – rather than sources of security. Processes to reform the police, the military and other security forces are underway, but don't do a very good job of integrating a gender perspective. Canada is involved in supporting some of these processes through the Canadian Police Arrangement. While Canada has made excellent progress over the past several decades in making domestic police forces more representative and more responsive to women's needs, many women – particularly marginalized women – continue to be left out. If Canada is going to help developing countries to build gender sensitive police forces, it needs to invest in building more gender sensitive police forces at home, too.
3. While we know quite a bit about women's experiences in conflict and its aftermath, there is still much work to be done in this area, both in terms of research and awareness-raising. As I'm sure our colleagues from the bureaucracy will confirm, policy is most effective when it is based on solid evidence. In order to develop evidence-based policy, Canada should prioritize and fund research on issues surrounding women, peace and security, particularly the collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data on these issues. Foreign Affairs used to support this type of work and could easily do so again.

4. To support the continuation of Canada's successes to date, and to help develop and implement better policies and programming in the future, Canada must develop, make public, fund and implement a National Action Plan for the Implementation of UNSC Resolution 1325. This should be a "whole of government" plan with equal participation from all relevant departments. It should include clear benchmarks and clear responsibilities. It *must* include significant, dedicated resources, both human and financial. It should be done transparently and in partnership with Canadian civil society organizations.