



## **Femmes Africa Solidarité**

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## ***PRESS RELEASE***

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## **WOMEN'S GROUPS MAKE INTERVENTIONS DURING SECURITY COUNCIL ARRIA FORMULA MEETING**

*SCR 1325 New York Advocacy Week, October 2006*

The UN Security Council heard impassioned statements from the representatives of several women's groups during the Arria Formula Meeting on the Role of Women in the Consolidation of Peace, held on October 25, 2006 in New York. The meeting took place as part of Security Council Meetings regarding Women, Peace and Security, and was an opportunity for women's NGOs and civil society to voice their concerns and debate progress made towards the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325.

The meeting featured three prominent speakers including Leymah Gbowee, the Executive Director of the Women in Peacebuilding Network (WIPNET) of Liberia; Barbara Thaimu-Bangura, the Coordinator for Grassroots Empowerment for Self-Reliance of Sierra Leone; and Safaa Elagib Adam, the Secretary-General of the Community Development Association of Sudan, whose presentation was delivered by Bineta Diop, Executive Director of Femmes Africa Solidarite (FAS).

The speakers reported on the situation of women in their respective countries and the efforts of NGOs and women's groups to facilitate peace. Gobowee for example, recounted how women's groups held vigils, petitioned for peace talks, and formed human barricades to prevent warring parties from leaving the table during tense negotiations in Liberia. Similarly, Thaimu-Bangura described the participation of women's groups in organizing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone, but lamented the lack of progress on several

recommendations, particularly around reparations for victims. Diop, on behalf of Elagib Adam, related that women have assumed heightened decision-making roles to protect the interests of their families during the conflict in Sudan, and that these same roles must be supported and sustained during times of peace as well.

All speakers noted that the commitments to SCR 1325 at the international level have not necessarily been translated into tangible improvements for countries in war. They suggested the following: that bench marks be set to monitor results; that UN country missions be better educated on the implementation of the resolution; and that mechanisms be instituted to hold governments accountable. The speakers also pointed to the continued sexual violence perpetrated on women during times of war, and reiterated the need for an end to impunity, and the beginning of justice for victims. It was also acknowledged that this justice includes addressing women's lack of land and property rights, increased poverty and lack of resources.

In addition, the speakers referred to the newly established Peacebuilding Commission, emphasizing that women and other members of civil society must be considered as key players and partners in implementing and monitoring its progress. This would involve drawing on local knowledge which is contextualized and country-specific in focus.

Two of the speakers also participated in a press conference afterwards where they reiterated and expanded on their statements and fielded questions from the media.

These interventions were important in bringing forward the voices of those working closest to conflicts to expose the ways in which SCR 1325 is, or is not, implemented from the perspective of those on the ground. While there is cause for celebration with the 6<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of SCR 1325, there remains much to be done in ensuring its full implementation. FAS will continue working, along with the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, to advise, monitor and report on these processes.

For further details webcast on the October Advocacy Week, and the Security Council and Arria Formula Meetings please visit: [www.peacewomen.org](http://www.peacewomen.org)

For access to the webcast of the SC and other events please visit: [www.un.org/webcast](http://www.un.org/webcast)

For more details about Femmes Africa Solidarité (FAS), please visit our website at [www.fasngo.org](http://www.fasngo.org)

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