

June 2009

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Note:

This letter is not on headed letter paper due to an administrative error.

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Thank you for your letter of 29 April to Bill Rammell about the UK National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325. I am replying as the Minister responsible for the UN.

I am pleased that you recognise the track record of the UK in the area of UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security. We have been a key supporter of work to further the agenda of UNSCRs 1325 and 1820. We continue to conduct a wide range of advocacy and programmes to this end in many of the world's trouble spots including Afghanistan, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The UK National Action Plan (NAP) sets out how the UK intends to implement UNSCR 1325 and the next update is due to take place over the summer of 2009. I anticipate its publication by September. I agree that annual updates of this plan would be appropriate and we will work towards this aim.

You asked about quantifiable impact from the implementation of the NAP. The current plan contains Action Points with specific outcomes which, if met, make a positive and demonstrable impact on furthering the 1325 agenda. Outcomes that have been met include reference to 1325 in all new UN peacekeeping mission mandates (reflecting Action point 1 outcome i), or the inclusion of gender advisors or gender focal points in all new UN peacekeeping missions (reflecting Action Point 3, outcome ii). However, your question on the use of indicators and benchmarks to track progress against our NAP raises an important issue. We are still considering the details, but will examine it thoroughly as part of the review, taking into account the UK Government's other competing priorities on conflict policy.

You also asked about arrangements for monitoring implementation across Whitehall departments and consultation with civil society. The cross-Whitehall 1325 group meets on a quarterly basis to discuss progress to date, current issues and areas for future activity. It is currently tasked with carrying out the evaluation and review of the UK NAP. The Whitehall group works co-operatively with civil society groups to discuss concerns and perspectives. Civil Society groups will be consulted, for instance, on the forthcoming NAP review.

The Rt Hon Lord Malloch-Brown
Minister of State