Building Resilient Societies The Relevance of UNSCR 1325 in Egyptôs Political Transition

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Abstract

United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820 and the more recent 1888, 1889, 1960, 2106, 2122 and 2242 reflect a rights-based approach to human security with a focus on the prevention of violence against women and girls and fostering their active and meaningful participation in public life in conflict and post conflict contexts. This is a particularly important framework in the African context where, over the past 5 years alone, conflict has plagued over 18 countries and has had devastating socio-economic impacts on women and led to the weakening of justice systems and social norms, which at the best of times secure minimum protection for women. In 2011 the North of the continent boiled over with political unrest which culminated with civil war in some countries. A notable phenomenon is that even in countries that escaped the predicament of armed conflict, women were subject to many of the same threats. As such, while UNSCR 1325 addresses the protection of women in times of armed conflict and peace building, provisions are still relevant in cases of political transition such as that of Egypt where there have been serious challenges to security, justice and accountability. The institutional framework in place for protecting women in conflict calls for their integration into the ensuing decision making process and inclusive dialogue is the only way to develop resilient and effective institutions for societies in transition. This paper will present a case study of lessons that could be learnt from UNSCR 1325 in terms of protecting women and girls from violence; ensuring the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in national policies; and increasing the participation of women in decision-making and political transition processes.

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