

To mark the **International Day of UN Peacekeepers**

the United Nations in partnership with the Goethe Institute welcomes you to the screening of

“RESOLUTION”



In 2010 one woman and her small team picked up the baton in the struggle against sexual violence in war and conflict. Throughout history rape survivors have had to deal with being dismissed as victims of an inevitable consequence of war. Combatants are honoured with medals while rape survivors are hidden in shame.

As the first ever UN special representative on sexual violence in war and conflict, Margot Wallström and her team have, over 10 short months, raised the issue of rape being used as a strategic weapon of war to the top of the agenda at the UN Security Council and thereby made the plight of the women an international peace and security issue.

RESOLUTION follows the battle fought by Wallström and the community of activists to develop and push through UN Resolution 1960, which provides the UN with the powers to hunt down and prosecute the perpetrators of sexual violence and end the cycle of impunity.

Margot Wallström is currently the United Nations Special Representative to the Secretary General on Sexual Violence and Conflict. Prior to her appointment, she served as First Vice-President of the European Commission, which is the executive branch for the European Union. Wallström also spent five years as EU Environment Commissioner. She has received several honorary doctorates and awards for her work on Sustainable Development and Climate Change. She has done extensive work to endorse an EU-Africa partnership on renewable energy, champion equal opportunities and to further the CSR agenda in Europe.



Marika Griehsel is an award winning Swedish correspondent, based in Africa for more than 10 years, she has produced documentaries and covered events in Africa, the Balkans, former eastern Europe and internationally.



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INTERNATIONAL: U.N. Peacekeepers Learn to Battle Sexual Violence in War

Imagine you're a U.N. peacekeeper driving along a dirt road surrounded by dense forests on each side in the conflict-hit region of eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Suddenly a half-naked local woman emerges from the bushes, and runs towards your vehicle, screaming in a language you do not understand.

What do you do?

If you bring her into your vehicle, you may be accused of sexually abusing her. But if you leave her, you will be blamed for doing nothing to help the war-hit civilians that you have been deployed to protect.

This is one of the many scenarios that the United Nations is putting before the thousands of blue helmets - as they prepare to deploy to hostile regions across the world - to help them combat rising cases of rape and sexual abuse in war zones.

According to the United Nations, sexual violence by government troops and armed rebels is increasingly being used as a cheap, effective strategy to terrorize communities trapped between warring factions, or even after a peace deal is in place.

From the DRC to the Darfur region of Sudan to the heavily militarised eastern regions of Myanmar, the rape and sexual abuse of women and girls is widespread, say humanitarians.

Human rights activists say peacekeepers deployed in these regions have often failed to understand the extent of the problem, and have often not done enough to protect those most vulnerable.

The United Nations says it is addressing this issue and is now mainstreaming gender issues in all areas of peacekeeping, including providing better pre-deployment training with real-life scenarios from the field and an inventory of best practices which can be followed.

"For the first time in 60 years of peacekeeping, we have made a list of the good examples of the best peacekeeping practices - these are some of the best methods to help protect civilians and help prevent sexual violence," Margot Wallstrom, the U.N.'s first Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, said in New Delhi recently.

"We have to look at how we can train and equip peacekeepers in the best possible way to meet these challenges. In a situation where there is no law and order, who do you look for? You look for the U.N."

The inventory includes examples from areas like Darfur where peacekeepers became armed escorts to accompany women and girls collecting firewood beyond camp perimeters, averting risks such as "firewood rape".

It also suggests patrols and escorts for women fetching water and going to market, providing them with fuel and firewood, building women's shelters, providing better lighting and sanitation facilities in camps so that they do not have to walk far at night, as well as evacuating rape victims and those who feel threatened.

"This is important. We have listed all these best peacekeeping practices and we now want to make sure that this is not just done ad hoc but make this part of the way we work in all peacekeeping operations," said Wallstrom, who was in the Indian capital to address a conference on the challenges of peacekeeping in 2015.

Wallstrom, who was appointed last year, cited the example in eastern DRC where hundreds of women were brutally raped by rebels in the town of Lu-vungi last August, saying this kind of sexual violence is preventable.

"One woman said to us 'They have taken my life, without killing me'. That's how deeply it affects a woman, a family, a village, a region and a country and this simply has to stop."

Source: Peace Women: http://www.peacewomen.org/news_article.php?id=3464&type=news