

# AWAW Newsletter 2014.



Women's Space in the Political Arena: Proposals from the Parliamentary Caucus

## Association of War Affected Women.

The Association of War Affected Women was established in 2000 to create a space for war affected women, specifically mothers and wives, of those who are missing to come together across the divide to work for peace. The Association of War Affected Women is committed to achieve sustainable peace in Sri Lanka and believes that peace has to be negotiated through an inclusive process.

We are also deeply committed to safeguard democracy and rights of all, specifically women's rights and advancement. As we believe that people's rights have to be safeguarded and democracy has to be strengthened in order to create a conducive atmosphere for peace to prevail. We are working towards a peaceful Sri Lanka, where all its peoples will be able to live with dignity, enjoying equal rights.

### Vision

Peaceful prosperous Sri Lanka where all its peoples are living with dignity enjoying equal right



### Mission

Work towards strengthening democracy, women's advancement and equal participation in order to achieve sustainable development and permanent peace in Sri Lanka

### Our main projects of the year

- ◆ Women Defining Security, Realizing UNSCR 1325" – Cont. from 2013
- ◆ Women Defining Security, Realizing UNSCR 1325 – Phase II
- ◆ Women's Space in the Political Arena: Proposals from the Parliamentary Caucus
- ◆ Bringing Villages to Normalcy, Upholding Traditional Values towards Reconciliation

*"Bringing women together across the divide"*



Visaka Dharmadasa  
Chair Association of War Affected Women

# Women Defining Security, Realizing UNSCR 1325” – Cont. from 2013

## Objectives

### District Workshop.

To train local level law enforcement officials, civil security committee members, health officials and representatives of the local clergy on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 with particular emphasis on women’s and girl’s security

To establish regional committees in order to build up a network with the trained law enforcement officers, religious leaders and the health sector representatives to ensure women’s security and safety

### Regional Workshop

To build coalitions among the participants from each region and with the local level

### University Workshop.

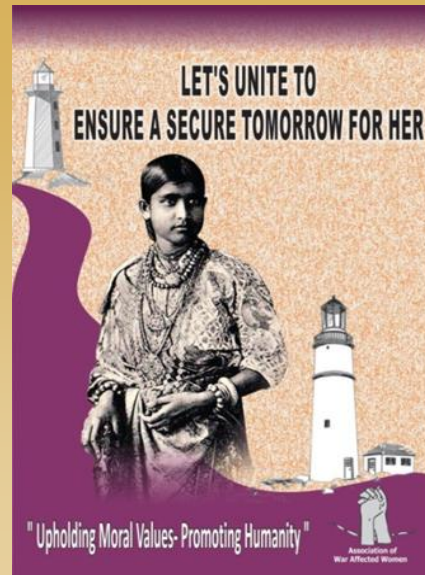
To train university students on UNSCR 1325 and 1820 with particular emphasis on women’s and girl’s security







- *Journey from Kalutara to Polgahawela Railway Station to distribute Poster and Leaflets, Sticker pasting*
- *Journey to Jaffna Point Pedro to distribute posters, leaflets and stickers*
- *One day seminar and the poster exhibition in Kandy with the participation of more than 575 men and women from all parts of the country. A Panel discussion on Sex and gender based violence and Distribution of Prizes for the winners of poster and essay completion took place.*



# Women's Space in the Political Arena: Proposals from the Parliamentary Caucus



When : June 20th 21st and 22nd 2014

Who: AWAU organized the two day interactive dialogue “Women’s Space in the Political Arena: Proposals from the Parliamentary Caucus” with the generous support of the Office of the Public Diplomacy of the U.S. Embassy. Forty eight female participants including one Parliament member, five provincial Council members and thirty Local government members of all political parties of the country, and women leaders including civil society members from all districts comprising all ethnic and religious groups of Sri Lanka participated in this conference.

Where: Hotel East Lagoon, Batticaloa

Why: The conference aimed at enhancing women’s political participation, by way of building a strong network of cross party women politicians of all the three tiers of governance in Sri Lanka

# “Women Defining Security – Realizing UNSCR 1325”- Phase II

## *What the Women Say “ACTIONS NOT WORDS COUNT”*

### **Launching the Advocacy Road Map for the full implementation of Women, Peace and Security Agenda in Sri Lanka -July 18th 2014 at Hotel Cinnamon Lakeside, Colombo**

The advocacy road map developed by AWAW in partnership with diverse group of activists and organizations from across the country working on Women, peace and security was launched with the presence of Her Excellency President Chandrika Kumaratunga, Madam Sanam Naraghi, international expert on women peace and security, members of the parliamentary caucus, Ambassadors and representatives from embassies, architects of the advocacy road map, heads of NGO’s and representatives as well as the donor agency representatives.

#### **Key issues in the advocacy road map:**

1. Inadequate women’s participation in politics.
2. Insensitivity towards women’s issues in the implementation of law.
3. Non implementation of the state policies concerning women.
4. Non implementation of LLRC recommendations pertaining to protection of women.



## Interactive dialogue – What the Women say – 15 Years of UNSCR

1325

**One two day seminar to discuss the advocacy road map in detail and gain the input of an international expert on the 19th and 20th July at Hotel Tamarind Tree, Andiambalama.**

**When:** 19th and the 20th of July 2014

**Where:** at Hotel Tamarind Tree, Minuwangoda

**Who:** 31 participants comprised of a member of the Parliamentary Caucus, ten Members of the Provincial Council and Local Governments, architects of the Advocacy Road map, FOKUS partners, members of the team 1325 as well as several members from the civil society took part in the workshop

**Why:** to discuss about the advocacy road map and its implementation as well as to gain the input of an international expert, Madam Sanam Naraghi, cofounder of International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN).



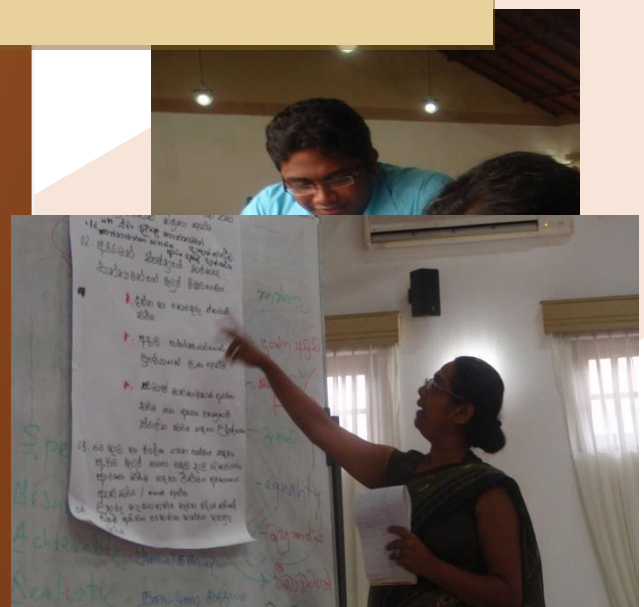
### Content of the Workshops

- ◆ The Path to UNSCR 1325: the Journey Ahead
- ◆ How do we want to shape our future – lessons from the past and looking to the future– post 2015 Agenda - Ms. Swarna Sumanasekara
- ◆ Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security- A Brief Overview

## Two-day Discussion on the Commonalities of the Parliamentary Women's Caucus Action Plan and the Advocacy Road Map on UNSCR 1325

A two day workshop was conducted to draft the commonalities of the Parliamentary women's caucus action plan and the road map on UNSCR 1325 on the 9<sup>th</sup> and the 10<sup>th</sup> of December at the Hotel Tamarind Tree, Minwangoda. Sixteen participants, including one Member of the parliamentary caucus, a member of the provincial council, architects of the advocacy road map and university students took part in the discussion. After the comprehensive analysis of the caucus action plan and the advocacy road map on UNSCR 1325 three common points were identified, and they are,

- laws and policies concerning women
- women's participation in politics
- women affected by natural or manmade disasters





# Bringing Villages to Normalcy, Upholding Traditional Values towards Reconciliation



## Training of Trainers (TOT) for 10 human rights defenders

### Course content

1. *Protecting Women's rights – Experience from International and Local Discourses*
2. *“Duties and responsibilities of Human Rights defenders within communities to protect human rights”*
3. *“A process of post war reconciliation– A human Rights perspective”*
4. *“Protecting women's rights - guidance from CEDAW convention*
5. *UNSCR 1325 and 1820 on Women Peace and Security*

## 1. TRAINING OF TRAINERS (TOT)

AWAW conducted a residential training workshop at Hotel Hilltop from 10<sup>th</sup> of September to the 14<sup>th</sup> of September on five interrelated subjects that covers basic law, human rights, CEDAW convention, UNSCR 1325 and 1820 and other relevant international and domestic instruments to 12 participants that comprised women lawyers, social workers and law apprentices. At the end of the program a pool of 10 women experts were selected and a training manual was prepared based on the five day training in order to use as a manual in facilitating the town level meetings. Experts on the subjects were brought in as resource personal from ministries, Universities, and civil society networks to facilitate the TOT.



## 2. TOWN LEVEL MEETINGS

### Objective

Post-war Sri Lankan Society a law abiding one, where human rights and human dignity will be respected and secure environment will be created to live for all its people



Followed by the residential TOT, selected women lawyers conducted 10 town level one day training in each of the selected 05 districts for 300 women and men participants on human rights, CEDAW convention, UNSCR 1325 and 1820 and other international and local conventions and legal instruments. A significant portion of these participants comprised of youth, leaders from community based organizations and school prefects.



Chair of AWAW attended the panel discussion as an International panelist at the event organized by Code Pink and WILPF as well the Nobel woman's initiative for Syrian peace talks in Geneva 20<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> of January 2014



AWAW 's study tour to Iran from the 15th to the 23rd of February 2014. AWAW Chair Visaka Dharmadasa, Ms. Sumitra Ratnayake from the AWAW board, and Ms. Sara Arumugam participated in the study Tour.



AWAW board hosted U.S. Ambassador Her Excellency Michele Sison for dinner at the Earls' Regency hotel, Kandy on the 4th of April.



Chair of AWAW participated at the "Combating Sexual Violence in Conflict" global summit held in London from the 10th to 13th of June 2014



AWAW was invited by the Chief women's development officer of the Kandy District to conduct a workshop on UNSCR 1325 similar to the one we did for the police officers, 35 women development officers were present from the district covering all the divisional secretary divisions.



AWAW coordinated a study tour for University of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo, Japan. Eight University students and Two Professors joined the tour from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> of August. The students visited a children's home in Kandy and spent time with the children as well as the team met with the Women's groups in Thottama, Walathapitiya and Digawapiya in Ampare district.



AWAW Chair participated at the conference "Memorialization as an alternative or Complementary TJ measures- Exchange and policy development in Asia" from 3rd to 7th November 2014 in Bangkok



AWAW Chair participated at the “Role of civil society in strengthening rule of law- based responses to terrorism and violent extremism in South Asia” from the 3rd to 5th December at the Institute of South Asian Studies National University of Singapore.



AWAW participated at the conference Third annual forum on women’s rights, peace and security in the Middle East and North Africa and Asia region organized by the ICAN- from November 7th to 12th in Sile, Turkey.



AWAW Chair was invited to deliver a speech at the American Corner, Kandy on the 8<sup>th</sup> of December in commemoration of the 16 Days of Activism, International Day Against Violence Against Women and International Human Rights Day.

