

**Australia Releases Draft Plan To Promote Women Role In War Zones**  
**Bernama**  
**August 18, 2011**

CANBERRA, Aug 18 (Bernama) -- Australia has released a draft action plan to promote the role of women in international conflict resolution as well as to cut down on sexual violence, its Federal Minister For Women Kate Ellis said Thursday.

"The fate of women in conflict zones was dire. They were raped, abducted, humiliated, abused, forced into slavery, and ostracized from their families and communities.

"Women's bodies in fact have become part of the battleground for war," China's Xinhua news agency cited Ellis as saying in a speech at the Parliament House in Canberra on Thursday.

She added that in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Uganda, Central African Republic and Sudan there had been mass sexual violence, including mass rape and sexual slavery of women and girls.

The draft plan has four aims, prevention, increase participation, protection from sexual and gender-based violence and relief and recovery.

It recommends gender and cultural training for all Australian police, military and civilian deployments.

Ellis said the draft plan was part of Australia's response to the United Nations resolution 1325, which recognizes the impact of war on women and girls, their increased vulnerability to sexual violence and their exclusion from peace agreements and post- conflict reconstruction.

The draft plan also gave credits to Australia's efforts to promote the role of women in the Asia Pacific region.

It said that in the Solomon Islands and Nauru, Australian police officers have worked with local police to help establish recruitment and training targets for women. The existing male-to- female ratio in the Nauru Police Force is now close to 60:40.

Besides, Ellis invites public to voice their feedback and opinions on the draft plan.

--BERNAMA

Copyright © 2011 BERNAMA

Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v5/newsworld.php?id=609060>