



Implementing 1325 – the lessons from Iraq

Associate All Party Parliamentary Group women, peace and security: Iraq Sub Group

**Tuesday 19 February 2008
Committee Room 2A House of Lords**

Chaired by Lord Judd, the APG heard from Professor Janet Benshoof on the training of the judges of the Iraq High Tribunal. This is a direct implementation of 1325 as the training focused on the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and other international legal instruments.

As a direct result of the training, the Anfal case included the testimony of women survivors of rape, and the Prosecutors comments noted that rape is a crime against humanity and recognized it as torture.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office funded civil society women activists to attend which enabled the judges of the IHT attending the training, to hear from women for the first time and considerably altered their view on rape. This group of women activists continues to be in regular contact with the judges for more than a year.

Further training has taken place in Kurdistan where women activists and members of the judiciary received information on international legal instruments including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

A number of peers attended and there were numerous questions on the current situation of women in Iraq.

It was noted that the training of the judges of the IHT is significant in that these same judges will be domestic judges once the IHT has completed its remit of trying crimes against humanity. The hope and anticipation is that the current use of international legal instruments and adherence to international human rights norms and laws, will enable the judges to use the same criteria for local cases. This is especially hopeful as the new Iraqi constitution allows for use of either international law or local law.

It was also noted that the treatment of witnesses in rape cases was of the highest order and international experts at the training noted the excellent way in which the witnesses have been treated.

