

**Statement**  
**by**  
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**at the**  
**Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security**  
**5 October 2009**

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Members of the Council,

It is an honour for me to introduce the Report of the Secretary-General on Women and Peace and Security (S/2009/465). May I begin by expressing gratitude to you, Mr. President, for giving me this opportunity to address the Council on the progress made in implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) over the past year. I would also like to express my appreciation for the leadership and commitment of Viet Nam in preparing for this open debate.

The report before you (S/2009/465) highlights ways in which armed conflict continues to affect women and girls in situations in which the Council has been seized. It identifies progress made in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and outlines challenges and some recommendations for addressing them.

Nine years since the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), women and girls continue to be victims of gender based violence, especially sexual violence, in many of the situations with which the Council was seized over the past year. Armed conflict and its aftermath continue to account for untold hardship for civilians, especially women and girls. These violations -- especially sexual violence against women and girls -- are pronounced during open hostilities, but they exist even where open hostilities have subsided. As noted in the statement delivered by the Deputy Secretary-General, unfortunately post-conflict atrocities often stay below the radar screen, seldom reaching the attention of the international community and leaving victims with little recourse for justice.

For his part, the Secretary General has repeatedly indicated his commitment to end violence against women and girls in conflict situations in this chamber -- on the 7<sup>th</sup> August, 30<sup>th</sup> September, and in the statement which has just been delivered by the Deputy Secretary-General.

Mr. President,

Member States, United Nations entities and civil society have continued to make progress in ensuring the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Progress is particularly evident in the areas of training and capacity development. As a result, in

some situations women's participation in mediating and negotiating peace, in searching for justice, in fostering reconciliation, in supporting disarmament and demobilization, and in rebuilding national institutions, is evident.

Much attention is being paid to protecting women from the threat of mines, which remains a pressing issue in post conflict situations. In the reporting period, there was a decrease in the number of casualties from such mines, reflecting intensified activities in this area. Of even greater significance is the recognition by women themselves of the importance of their participation in mine action activities.

Among the most significant signs of progress is the adoption, by many Member States, of National Action Plans to guide the implementation of the resolution, including some that have recently emerged from conflict. The process of developing many of these plans has been collaborative, leading to the sharing of experiences and expertise among Member States, UN entities and civil society organizations. This is a welcome development, which should be emulated. However, Mr. President, the adoption of National Action Plans is only a first step. We must not lose sight of the fact that these plans must be implemented to achieve their goals and that they must be backed by resources. More efforts by the United Nations system and by Member States will be required beyond developing capacity. Concrete actions must be taken to ensure that services are provided and programmes implemented at the country levels.

It is critical that the Council continues to play a strong advocacy role to root out sexual violence in conflict and end to its use as a tactic and weapon of war. I commend the Council for the adoption of resolution 1888 (2009) as a reaffirmation of its commitment to eliminate gender-based violence in conflict situations. Equally important is the Council's unequivocal commitment to women's engagement in the entirety of the peace and security processes. The Council must be relentless in its insistence on women as peacekeepers, peace builders and decision-makers. As we approach the tenth anniversary, the Council must rededicate itself to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In this regard, I am pleased to inform the Council that preparations are already underway for the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). In June of this year, the government of Iceland co-organized with the University of Iceland an international conference on the tenth anniversary. Last month, the Deputy Secretary-General, the African Union and the European Commission jointly organized a ministerial breakfast focusing on resolution 1325 (2000). Likewise, civil society organizations are also engaged in the preparations. What consistently emerges is the expectation that the Security Council will convene a ministerial-level meeting next year to review progress to date and to take concrete action to reinvigorate efforts towards the full implementation of the resolution.

Mr. President,

In spite of the demonstrated commitment at the highest levels, the persistent obstacles to implementation noted in the report before you will require even greater resolve from all of us. Countries in conflict and emerging from conflict will require

support to strengthen their judiciary and security institutions to enable them to hold perpetrators of crime accountable. Despite progress, still few women are included in peace negotiations in countries affected by conflict and war. The reporting on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, and indeed of the gender dimensions of armed conflict, is yet to become universal in country-specific reports to the Council. This information is essential for the effective monitoring and reporting to the Council. It should become a standard feature of all country reports.

Finally, Mr. President,

I wish to draw the attention of the Council to the persistent blatant disregard of international law, international humanitarian law and Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) by parties to armed conflict. This is a major and fundamental challenge in the implementation of the resolution. Although the resolution requires them to take actions, to date no mechanism has been designed to hold warring factions accountable. Thus, they violate women and girls with impunity. This aspect of the resolution requires the Council's attention. Warring parties must be made accountable. Without this, the protection of civilians as a whole, and of women and girls in particular, will remain elusive, and the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) out of reach.

I thank you for your attention.