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Statement

by

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**Security Council Open Debate
on Women and Peace and Security**

New York

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President, I would like to thank you for the initiative to convene this high-level open debate on Women and Peace and Security, marking the 10th anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Your presence here shows the support of Uganda to the issue. Let me further congratulate you for the efforts that resulted in the Presidential Statement before the Council today. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for joining us from far away, which is testimony to his personal commitment to this subject.

It is a particular pleasure to welcome Under-Secretary-General Ms. Michelle Bachelet in the Chamber. I would like to congratulate her on her appointment and assure her of Austria's full support. We are convinced that UN Women will play a central role in further advancing this agenda. We are equally grateful for the valuable input of Ms. Thelma Awori representing the Civil Society Advisory Group on Women, Peace and Security. Civil society has always been a driving force behind this issue and we are looking forward to further advancing this agenda in close partnership.

When adopting this landmark resolution 10 years ago, the Security Council recognized that equal participation, representation and full involvement of women in all aspects of peace-building and security, the protection of women as a group with specific needs and concerns as well as the prevention of sexual and other violence are not only a security issue but also vital for sustainable peace and stability. With the adoption of the resolutions on "sexual violence" and "women and girls in post conflict situations" the Council now disposes of a strong and well developed normative framework.

Over the past decade, progress in the implementation has been slow and uneven. The resolution's real impact remains to be felt on the ground in many areas. All too often women do not make it to the tables where decisions are taken in peace processes or post-conflict reconstruction that have a direct impact on their lives. There are no issues that are not also women's issues. Every month hundreds of women and children fall victims to sexual violence under the eyes of their governments and the international community. Women and girls with disabilities remain even more vulnerable. Ten years on, our focus must therefore lie on how we can ensure better and more coherent implementation of the objectives enshrined in these resolutions and make a real difference for women in conflict and post-conflict situations.

The Council has at its disposal a whole range of tools for the implementation of resolution 1325. These include measures such as mandates of peacekeeping and other relevant missions, briefings and reports, commissions of inquiry as well as targeted measures and sanctions. We have to be ready to use these tools and to translate words into practice in a consistent manner. We have to ensure that those that disregard the Council's decisions are being held accountable.

The Arria Meeting of the Security Council on 19 October co-chaired by Austria, Mexico and the United Kingdom has made it clear that we need more information on progress and on what measures have been successful. The comprehensive set of indicators on 1325 which received the Council's support today, will finally close this important gap and provide us with qualitative and quantitative data on important areas such as the prevalence of sexual violence or the number of women participating in peace-processes. This information will allow us to better guide and target our actions in the future. We hope that the indicators will now become operational as a matter of urgency. We do believe that all Member States should use the indicators relevant for their country's situation, including in their national action plans in order to receive a truly global picture of the implementation of resolution 1325.

As a next step we request the Secretary-General to include the information gathered on the basis of the indicators in his country-specific and relevant thematic reports in a systematic and comprehensive manner. Without accurate and timely information, it is difficult for the Council to take appropriate action in areas that need our urgent attention, such as the prevention of sexual violence. We hope the Council will in the future also receive briefings on situations, where data gathered through the indicators suggest an outbreak of violence against women or a further deterioration of a situation. Early warning and prevention is still by far the best protection.

"Women, Peace and Security" needs to be on the agenda of the Council every time the Council considers a country situation or relevant thematic issues. The establishment of an Informal Expert Group would have further enabled the Council to evaluate information on the situation of women and girls in conflict situations around the globe. We hope that the Council will revert to this question in the near future, once the indicators are fully operational. The Security Council has to show active leadership and shoulder its responsibility for the implementation of its resolution 1325.

The high level event on resolution 1325 organized by Canada in the margins of the general debate already provided us with an opportunity to make concrete and measurable commitments to implement resolution 1325. On this occasion I have already announced a few Austrian contributions. Today, I would like to add further contributions.

At the national level:

- The development and implementation of National Action Plans is crucial to improve the implementation of Res. 1325. Austria was one of the first countries to develop a National Action Plan for resolution 1325. We will take the 10th anniversary of Resolution 1325 as an opportunity to revise our National Action Plan. Work will start beginning of 2011 in close cooperation with civil society and other line ministries.
- Austria is committed to a continuous enhancement of its rule of law standards. The Rome Statute is the first international treaty to classify crimes against women, like rape or other forms of sexual violence, as crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide. Austria is currently in the process of incorporating the crimes of the ICC Statute into its criminal code.

- Austria commits to contextualize education, and pre-deployment training of its armed forces personnel in order to address specific operational realities in regions of deployment, including the impact of conflict on gender relations and the role and participation of women (on the basis of relevant UN guidelines);

At the international level:

Supporting the UN in the implementation of 1325

- The newly-established entity "UN Women" has a central role in coordinating the UN's activities in implementing Res. 1325. Austria is committed to support UN Women and its efforts in making the newly developed indicators operational. In this context, Austria will provide UN Women with voluntary financial contributions.

Supporting the implementation of 1325 through the Austrian multilateral development cooperation

- Through the Austrian Development Agency, Austria supports and implements projects tailored towards the implementation of 1325, in particular in relation to violence against women, DDR, cooperation with civil society for conflict prevention and peace-keeping. We will continue with these efforts. The Austrian multilateral development cooperation will keep a strong focus on women and children in crisis and post conflict situations.
- With its expertise in the development of a National Action Plan on 1325, Austria stands ready to work together in the context of a 'Twinning Project' with partner countries to support the establishment of National Action Plans on 1325.

Supporting the implementation of 1325 through Austria's engagements in the area of peacekeeping

- Austria commits to deploy gender experts (e.g. Military Gender Advisor) to military components of peace operations if designated and posted by the international community.
- Furthermore, Austria undertakes to ensuring the availability of immediate-response personnel (Gender Field Advisor, Gender Focal Points) within national contingents to address women and girls' urgent needs, with particular respect to health, security and justice.
- Austria will continue to further strengthen its training activities on 1325, in particular in pre-deployment trainings for peace and humanitarian operations that are being provided for civilian and military experts from around the world by the Austrian Study Center for Peace and Conflict Resolution (ASPR), and increase its training efforts in the Austrian Diplomatic Academy in 2011.
- Including through its Special Envoy for International Women's Issues, Ambassador Dr. Ursula Plassnik, Austria will continue to promote the implementation of Resolution 1325 including in the UN, the EU, the Council of Europe and the OSCE. Austria is committed to dialogue initiatives promoting in particular gender equality and strengthening women in public life and dialogue activities. For example, Austria has established an international Network on

"Promoting Female Leadership in Intercultural and Interreligious Dialogue" first meeting in June 2010. Certainly, I also commit to raise awareness in my bilateral contacts for Res. 1325, where appropriate.

Let me finally reiterate my hope that the commitments to action will not be a onetime effort limited to the 10 year anniversary. We are ready to follow-up on our commitments and to review progress in the implementation annually at the Open Debates on women, peace and security.