

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, November 30th 2012,
Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Mehdiyev, Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the United Nations.

I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening the present open debate on women and peace and security. I thank the Deputy Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the President and Founder of Femmes Afrique Solidarité for their statements and presentations. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General for his report on the topic (S/2012/732).

Azerbaijan reiterates its strong condemnation of all acts of violence committed against women and girls in situations of armed conflict and calls upon all parties to such conflicts to strictly abide by their obligations under international humanitarian and human rights law. All the necessary measures must be taken to bring perpetrators of such acts to justice and to put an end to impunity. Azerbaijan welcomes the increasing attention of the Security Council and the wider international community to the topic. Indeed, the adoption by the Security Council of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000) was an important milestone that took up the issue of women and peace and security as a separate thematic issue and brought international visibility to the plight of women and girls in situations of armed conflict. The subsequent Council resolutions, presidential statements and other relevant documents have contributed to developing a solid framework and raising awareness of the impact that sexual violence has on victims, families and societies.

As the Secretary-General has pointed out in his report, 37 States have adopted national action plans to implement that resolution. Several countries have also adopted temporary special measures to increase the number of women in decision-making bodies. The protection of civilians has been included in the mandates of 8 of 16 peacekeeping missions.

The establishment of the post of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict has added a new dimension to the global efforts to fight that scourge. I would like to take the opportunity to wish Ms. Zainab Bangura, newly appointed Special Representative of the Secretary-General, every success in carrying out her important mandate.

Despite some achievements since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution remains too low. We support the appointment of more women as mediators, special representatives, special envoys and heads of missions. We take positive note of the issuance of Guidance for Effective Mediation on addressing conflict-related sexual violence in ceasefire and peace agreements, which provides mediators with normative standards and strategies. We look forward to the practical implementation of the Guidance.

There is a clear need to increase the number of female military and police personnel in United Nations missions, and we appreciate the efforts taken by troop- and police-contributing countries to that end. At the same time, as the report of the Secretary-General underlines, increased numbers alone are not enough, and gender expertise is also needed. We stress the importance of regular training for gender advisers and of the promotion the role of women protection advisers in peacekeeping missions.

It is obvious that States bear the primary responsibility for enhancing women's participation in conflict-prevention and resolution and in peacebuilding, and all United Nations mechanisms

should work closely with respective Governments to support and complement their efforts. We share the Secretary-General's view that international assistance for relief and recovery work is essential in supporting countries in ending violence and building peace.

We believe that women's civil society organizations, in close cooperation with the relevant Governments, can advance the women and peace and security agenda by bringing forward their concerns, priorities and rights in conflict prevention and resolution, and in the peacebuilding process. That will also allow women not only to benefit from the gains achieved in such processes, but also to be active contributors to peace, security and development.

More resolute and targeted measures are required to end impunity for the most serious crimes of concern to the international community, including those committed against women in situations of armed conflict. Among the pressing issues requiring urgent action and attention is that of women taken hostage and reported missing in connection with armed conflict. We are continuing our efforts to address that disturbing phenomenon, including through the relevant biannual resolution of the General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women, of which Azerbaijan is a main sponsor.

The heightened vulnerability of civilians in wartime, in particular forcibly displaced persons, refugees, women and children requires urgency, dedication and strong commitment in all protection efforts at the regional and global levels that must be free of selectivity and politically motivated approaches and purposes.

Azerbaijan notes the role that the relevant humanitarian mandates must play in that regard and thus ensure that all situations of armed conflict, including of a protracted nature, receive due attention by the international community.