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**BANGLADESH**

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Statement by

Mr. Muhammad Ali Sorcar

Charges d' Affaires a.i., Permanent Mission of Bangladesh to the United Nations  
at the open debate of the Security Council on 'Women, peace and security'

New York, 29 October 2008

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Mr. President,

Let me begin by thanking you, Mr. President, for your initiative in organizing this open debate on Women, Peace and Security.

Mr. President,

Women's contribution to peace has long been ignored and underestimated. They tend to fade in the background when official peace negotiations begin. Such negotiations are often identified as male domains and are often considered closer to a man's reality than to woman's. However, peace is much beyond the end of direct conflict. This lacuna leads to formulation of narrow policies and programmes where the concerns of women are not adequately addressed. It is therefore, important to appreciate the complex way the gender dimension interacts with conflict resolution. Realignment of gender roles and positions should be an integral part of the challenge of rebuilding war-torn societies. International commitment in engaging women in peace talks should be realized by preparing concrete guidelines for enabling women's representation as part of negotiating delegations and in expert/observer roles.

Involving women in peace initiatives in greater numbers alone cannot ensure their equal participation and quality of engagement. In peace negotiations, informed cross-section of women should take part, including those directly affected by conflicts, who have the expertise to contribute and make a difference in engagement. While creating a greater political space for women, States must ensure them to operate there in their own rights. To ensure this, states have to invest in their capacity building so that they can take emphasize their full role in conflict resolution.

Mr. President,

Concerted efforts are needed for research, analysis and knowledge sharing on women and girls in conflict situations to inform effective policy and program interventions. A monitoring system based on non-discriminatory standards should be established to reflect the real progress made and identify the gaps in the implementation of resolution 1325. A working group on women, peace and security may be useful in this regard. Use of the ICT tools and the media can raise public awareness and advocate the strength of women in promoting peace and security worldwide.

The Council should pursue a stronger and more systematic working relationship with civil society, NGOs and women's organizations through the increased use of the Arria formula or similar arrangements at all levels.

National action plans and initiatives must take up gender mainstreaming for peace and security rather than mere filling up gender quotas. There should be gender auditing of these national efforts. While formulating national plans, efforts should be made to integrate women who are direct stakeholders of the peace process. Work of national governments, however, has to be sustained by increased international cooperation to make the desired impact on the ground. The UN's gender machinery should also be adequately resourced to complement national efforts.

Mr. President,

Multidimensional peacekeeping operations have large potential in addressing the security and well being of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. TCCs/PCCs must continue to increase the numbers of uniformed and civilian female personnel. They should take up the obligation to ensure pre-deployment training for their military and civilian personnel to be complemented with mission-specific training, community orientation and familiarization with local gender dynamics. Pre-deployment training should also indoctrinate the shift of orientation in civilian protection which considers sexual violence as fundamental to the achievement of mission objectives. Deployments should routinely include personnel with expertise in gender issues and addressing sexual violence to inform deployment planning and resourcing. A reinforced commitment to the integration of a gender perspective is also necessary to transform the C-34 into a body that actively contributes to the larger efforts to implement SCR 1325. We believe the resolution 1820 will further facilitate the UN's peacekeeping and peacebuilding endeavours.

Bangladesh supports a greater role for women in all UN peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions. As one of the largest troop contributing countries to UNPKOs Bangladesh is ever conscious of her responsibilities to incorporate the gender dimensions particularly the essential elements of 1325 in the pre-deployment training of peace-keepers. The number of women in peacekeeping from Bangladesh is set to increase in coming days to ensure the gender balance in our share of the deployment.

The PBC should implement Security Council resolution 1325 fully in conflict resolution, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. As a member of the PBC we remain wary of integrating gender perspectives in the formulation of integrated peacebuilding strategies.

Mr. President,

Since the adoption of resolution 1325, the world has witnessed heightened international attention devoted to the enhancement of the role of women in peace and security. Nevertheless, the challenges still outpace the achievements. Women continue to languish in all conflict and post-conflict situations. Failure to address their concerns in formal peace processes has made peace and development unsustainable. The international community would need to summon up all political will to raise a greater sense of urgency and consciousness among all stakeholders to create an environment for freeing women of the world from the fall-outs of wars and conflicts.

I thank you.

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