

**Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Conflict, June 24<sup>th</sup> 2013, Security Council Chamber**

*Statement by Mr. Machado, Permanent Mission of Brazil to the United Nations.*

I thank you, Sir, for convening this debate. I also thank the Secretary- General for his remarks. We are grateful to Special Representative Zainab Bangura for her presentation. My delegation also thanks Ms. Jane Adong Anywar and Ms. Angelina Jolie for their participation.

Sexual violence is probably one of the most shameful facets of armed conflict. Despite the progress achieved since the adoption of resolution 1820 (2008), the deliberate use of sexual violence as a tactic of war is still widespread. Effectively addressing the remaining challenges requires combining prevention, justice and support to victims.

As with any other type of violence against civilians, conflict prevention is the best way to ensure the protection of women and girls. First and foremost, parties and the international community, especially the Council, must actively seek to prevent conflict from arising and, if conflict emerges, resolutely commit to settling their differences by peaceful means. This is an ethical imperative and an objective international obligation under the Charter.

The effective prevention of sexual violence in armed conflict also requires the strengthening of national institutions and capabilities so that States can lead in designing and implementing comprehensive domestic strategies in this domain. The international community's duty is to provide adequate support to local authorities, when requested, and cooperate with national efforts in areas such as awareness-raising, education campaigns, reconciliation and early-warning systems.

Furthermore, through peacekeeping operations and special political missions, the United Nations can play an important preventive role. To that end, Member States must ensure that sufficient resources are allocated to activities in this area in the United Nations budget. We must also adequately train our peacekeepers in women, peace and security issues. The Secretariat and missions throughout the world must continue to improve prevention tools. In this regard, Brazil is pleased at the progress made on the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements.

In our prevention efforts, the interlinkage between security, development and sustainable peace must not be overlooked. Prevention can greatly benefit from women's empowerment and gender equality, which in many cases depend on social inclusion and economic opportunity. Adequately responding to the needs of women in areas such as education, employment and health services helps create favourable preconditions for their long-term protection.

The consistent prosecution of sexual crimes is a strong deterrent to future incidents. The United Nations is in a unique position to cooperate with national authorities, as appropriate, in strengthening national justice systems. Brazil welcomes the work of Ms. Bangura's office in this area, as well as the valuable role that the United Nations Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict can play.

National Governments should also focus on seeking to improve services for victims. Authorities and societies must be ready to provide the critical health, psychosocial, legal and other support needed by women and girls who have been subject to the horrors of sexual violence in conflict situations.

Brazil is seeking to do its part. Our Ministry of Defence has signed a letter of intent with UN-Women to deepen our cooperation regarding the training of peacekeepers on gender issues and the promotion of South-South cooperation on this subject. In Haiti, we have been helping to build local

capacity to deal with victims of gender-based violence in areas such as health, justice and security. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, more than 400 victims of sexual violence have benefited from the Brazilian contribution to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

The international community must continue to work together to translate the increasing global awareness of the scourge of sexual violence in conflict into actual improvement of the security of women in armed conflict. Brazil remains committed to this cause.