

Today, in many conflict areas, protecting women's rights and interests and enabling them to play a role in conflict resolution has already become very important work for peacekeeping operations. The Missions in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Kosovo have intensified their fight against the trafficking in women and have adopted special measures to protect its victims. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sierra Leone, peacekeeping staff have improved their capacities, through the training and sensitization process, to protect women against violent attack and to address the peacetime reintegration of women soldiers. In Timor-Leste, women are playing an increasingly important role in their country's reconstruction. Their representation in the Government and Parliament is already near 30 per cent. We welcome those positive developments. We hope that the United Nations and the relevant agencies can summarize those successful experiences and apply them to other peacekeeping operations.

In order to further implement resolution 1325 (2000), the international community still has much work to do. In that regard, I should like to emphasize the following three points.

First, the Security Council should intensify its conflict prevention and resolution efforts to essentially protect women from the harm of war while protecting their rights and interests as much as possible.

Secondly, violent crimes against women must be addressed within the framework of law, and the Governments of the countries concerned are duty-bound to seriously pursue such cases and bring the criminals to justice. Parties to conflicts must comply with international humanitarian law and adopt special measures aimed at protecting women from violent attack. In addition, we support the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy with regard to peacekeeping personnel, and we call on troop-contributing countries to improve the training and supervision of their peacekeeping staffs that they truly comply with the relevant provisions of the United Nations Code of Conduct.

Thirdly, the role played by women in conflict settlement cannot be neglected; in some conflict areas, it has even become essential. Therefore, we support participation by women in all phases of the peace process. We hope that Security Council missions and all parties concerned will undertake further efforts to

create conditions conducive to more extensive and in-depth participation by women in that regard.

In conclusion, lasting peace cannot be realized without participation by women. The Beijing Declaration, adopted in 1995, says:

"Local, national, regional and global peace is attainable and is inextricably linked with the advancement of women, who are a fundamental force for leadership, conflict resolution and the promotion of lasting peace at all levels".

China has always attached importance to the protection of women's rights and interests and to the advancement of women. We shall continue to work together with the international community for the genuine achievement of the objectives set forth in resolution 1325 (2000).

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria) (spoke in French): I thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this important meeting, which enables us to assess the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). I should also like to thank the countries — particularly Germany and the Netherlands — that had the good will to be represented at the ministerial level at this meeting, thus emphasizing the importance of the subject under consideration.

The briefings presented by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno and Ms. Amy Smythe at the beginning of our discussion were extremely useful, because both speakers refused to employ the jargon sometimes used in this field. Their view of the reality on the ground is not complacent, but also not resigned. I thank them for their recommendations, and — as the representative of China just said — the Security Council should take those recommendations seriously into account and follow up on them.

As a country associated with the European Union (EU), Bulgaria aligns itself fully with the statement to be made later by the representative of Italy — which holds the presidency — on behalf of the Union.

The adoption three years ago of resolution 1325 (2000) clearly represented a significant success in the international community's efforts to ensure that the role of women in preventing and resolving armed conflicts is not underestimated. The resolution provides a very important legal framework for action by the Council, but we should not stop there. It must be said that the results of its implementation are meagre indeed.

Women and children still constitute the majority of civilian victims of armed conflict. They are subjected to every form of violence and trafficking, a situation that can no longer be tolerated.

Women are not just victims of violence. They are often the driving force for peace. Here I think of two personal experiences which greatly impressed me during Security Council missions to conflict areas. The first was in Bunia, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where the mission met the President of the Ituri interim assembly, Ms. Petronille Vaweka, an extraordinary woman whose courage and determination impressed all the members of the Council who took part in that mission. She is an example of how a courageous woman of great moral stature can help her fellow citizens. Meeting her was an unforgettable experience for me. Secondly, an image comes to mind of a meeting of the Security Council mission in Mitrovica, Kosovo, with a local Serbian women's organization, whose wisdom and willingness to help the inhabitants of that divided city and bring them together impressed everyone.

Those personal recollections prompt me to think of one very important aspect of the activities of the Security Council, and the United Nations in general, in implementing resolution 1325 (2000): very close cooperation with women's organizations and networks, which exist in all conflict areas. Such cooperation has proved to be very useful. We need to move forward along those lines. I believe that peacekeeping missions are becoming increasingly aware of this and are benefiting from it more and more.

It is also important for women to participate at all stages in peace negotiations — preparation, planning, decision-making and implementation. Women should be the subjects, not just the objects, of peace efforts.

In conclusion, I emphasize that Bulgaria hopes that the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000) will be implemented on the ground in all the missions that the Council establishes and provides with a mandate.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I welcome the initiative of the United States delegation in convening this public debate on women and peace and security.

I thank the Under-Secretary-General for his detailed briefing, and welcome his personal involvement in this issue. I listened with great interest

to the statement of Ms. Amy Smythe about the application on the ground in the Democratic Republic of the Congo of the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000).

France fully aligns itself with the statement to be made later by the representative of Italy — which holds the presidency of the European Union — on behalf of the Union.

I begin by welcoming the progress made during the past year. Last year we recommended the creation of the post of adviser on gender issues within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. I am pleased to note that that proposal was adopted. I encourage the Department to develop its local network of advisers on gender issues. It is also essential that advisers with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, the United Nations Mission in Liberia and shortly, I hope, the United Nations Mission in Côte d'Ivoire, coordinate their activities so as to ensure a better understanding of the regional dimension of the problem. Reports to the Council should include as often as possible information on the situation of women and children. I invite the Department and the Office of Ms. Angela King — to whom I pay tribute — to cooperate closely on the common objectives set out in resolution 1325 (2000).

The challenges regarding the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) are not to the Secretary-General and the Security Council alone. They must be addressed by the entire United Nations system, in a spirit of cooperation and with imagination. They must be addressed on a daily basis, not just once a year during our commemorative debate. It is all well and good to commemorate the anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), but its provisions must be implemented in every new mandate and United Nations operation. We must continually try to increase the role and contribution of women on the ground in United Nations operations, particularly as military observers, members of civilian police forces, human rights specialists and members of humanitarian operations.

Much remains to be done. In his report (A/58/323) on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, the Secretary-General stated clearly that the differential impact of conflict on women called for more effective responses from the international community. Here I highlight three key words: prevention, justice and participation.