

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security – 29 October 2008
Extract Meeting Transcript / English S/PV.6005

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Mr. Tiendrébéogo (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): We should like to express our gratitude to your delegation, Mr. President, for having organized this debate on the full-fledged and equal participation of women in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and security efforts. I should also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2008/622) and Ms. Mayanja for presenting it this morning. We are just as grateful to Mr. Le Roy, Ms. Alberdi and Ms. Taylor for their important contributions.

The regular review of the state of implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) testifies to the interest of the Security Council and the international community in this important issue. It is comforting to note that there has been significant progress since the resolution was adopted, including the setting up of increasingly effective legal and institutional frameworks that are the expression of the constantly growing awareness of the importance of the contribution that women have made and could make to peacekeeping and the promotion of peace. Even better, the need to take into account women's specific needs before, during and after conflicts is now part and parcel of strategies and plans for preventing and emerging from crises and for reconstruction and peacebuilding. That is to the credit not only of Member States but of the United Nations — to whose leadership we should pay tribute — and of regional and subregional organizations, as well as of many civil society organizations.

However, significant as that progress is, it cannot mask the reality — the reality that the results of women's participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding is far from what was expected and that many challenges, such as sexual violence of all types and impunity, remain to be met before resolution 1325 (2000) is truly and fully implemented. We are all the more concerned by this reality because we are but a few days away from the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

It is now recognized that the systematic involvement of women in negotiation and mediation efforts, in the elaboration of peace agreements and in reconstruction and reconciliations strategies is essential. The Security Council has reaffirmed that on many occasions. It did so quite recently, on 23 September, on the occasion of its 5979th meeting, the high-level meeting on mediation as a peaceful way to settle conflicts.

The involvement of women involves a collective and shared responsibility. It is an individual responsibility, for we must rid ourselves of certain prejudices and other demeaning concepts regarding the place and role of women in society. Indeed, it is no secret that the challenge of socio-cultural inertia in this regard is often one of the most difficult challenges to take on. It is a responsibility of States and parties to conflicts, as they have the primary obligation to ensure the protection of women and their involvement in the search for solutions to crises and to mainstream the concept of women, peace and security and to strive to ensure its effective implementation. Among other things, we call for strengthening women's capacities, especially in the techniques of negotiation and mediation, as well as strengthening the female components of military and police contingents in peacekeeping operations.

It is a responsibility of United Nations bodies and subregional and regional organizations, which must further strengthen the use of women's peacemaking and negotiating talents. That means, inter

alia, enlarging the female component of representatives, envoys and heads of offices — all key elements of the good offices of those organizations, without forgetting an increase in the number of women decision makers at all levels. To illustrate, the African Union included in its Constitutive Act the obligation to take gender equality into account in its programmes and activities, while the gender aspect is a reality in the composition of the Commission of the African Union. As to the Economic Community of West African States, it has elaborated a plan of action on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

It is a responsibility of civil society, an outstanding partner and a relay in the dissemination of good practices in the promotion of gender issues. In many crisis situations it has amply proven its ability to transcend passion and partisan approaches to mobilize energy for peace. Finally, it is a responsibility of women themselves, who must set up national, regional and international solidarity networks to share experiences and strengthen their capacities. In that way they will be in a position to contribute to setting up platforms and reference frameworks for the participation of women in peace processes.

My delegation pays tribute to the pertinence of the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report regarding accelerating the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Those that address the Security Council deserve the greatest attention, given the role this body plays in the maintenance of international peace and security. We especially invite the Council to step up its cooperation with Member States and sub-regional and regional organizations and to make more frequent use of the Arria Formula, which will enable it to better consolidate the foundations of some of its actions and decisions.

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) represents an important stage in the collective will of the international community to promote the rights and interests of women. However, it should not be regarded as an end in itself. In other words, we should not be satisfied by simple regular reviews. Only genuine political will coupled with concrete commitment to peace will make possible the achievement of the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000). The United Nations overall, and the Security Council in particular, have a central role to play in that regard, which they must continue to discharge fully.