

Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Conflict, April 2014, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Ambassador Cristian Barros. Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations.

Chile would like to thank the Nigerian presidency for convening this open debate on sexual violence in conflict. We would also like to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and his Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, for their briefings. And we are grateful to Ms. Rhoda Misaka for her statement, which calls us to act decisively to prevent and eradicate this scourge and the stigma that goes with it, and to ensure the restoration and reintegration of its survivors.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be delivered later by the representative of Austria on behalf of the Human Security Network, of which my country is a member.

We would like to highlight the priority that the Secretary-General has accorded this subject since the publication in 2006 of his report on the “In-depth study on all forms of violence against women” (A/61/122/Add.1), which addressed sexual violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. In the eight years since then, we have adopted resolutions 1820 (2008), 888 (2009), 1960 (2010) and 2106 (2013), all sponsored by Chile, and whose implementation will contribute to the Secretary-General’s recommendations in the report before us today (S/2014/181). That comprehensive, multisectoral and multidimensional report, and its preventive and protective framework, will enable us to establish early-warning mechanisms and appropriate responses. We commend the field visits the Special Representative has conducted and the commitments made by national and regional authorities to the United Nations system, which have been reflected in resolutions renewing mandates. We would also like to highlight the Special Representative’s recent visit to the Central African Republic, during which President Samba-Panza renewed the commitment expressed in the 2012 joint communiqué.

Such efforts must be backed up by holding perpetrators of sexual violence to account and combating their impunity. The International Criminal Court is an important complement to the work of national courts and hybrid tribunals in this area, as we saw in the trial of Jean-Pierre Bemba and the voluntary surrender and subsequent arrest of Bosco Ntaganda. The proliferation of arms has helped to create an environment conducive to this type of violence. Chile, aware of the problems associated with that proliferation, has signed the Arms Trade Treaty and urges other States to support it.

Chile welcomes the policy and operational recommendations for preventing and eradicating this type of violence, and stresses that primary responsibility in this area belongs to the States concerned. In that regard, we would like to emphasize the importance of multidisciplinary, timely and non-discriminatory assistance to survivors of sexual violence, including children born of such violence, of ensuring targeted and appropriate services for children and adults and of promoting survivors’ empowerment and reintegration. We call on all parties to conflicts who are responsible for, or suspected of, committing acts of sexual violence, including those listed in the report, to put a stop to such violations and make concrete and time-bound commitments to protect. Mediators and envoys involved in mediation, ceasefire, peace and preventive diplomacy processes must be properly trained in this area and ensure that peace agreements contain concrete provisions concerning them, including ensuring adequate preservation of the evidence of such crimes.

Preventive measures should be explicitly reflected in the processes of security sector reform, of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, and of justice reform initiatives in areas such as capacity and policing. We reiterate the important role of reporting, prevention, protection and reintegration played by civil society, including women's organizations, community leaders, religious leaders, the media and human rights activists, and we support the efforts of the system to build the capacity of these groups.

The situation of internally displaced persons and refugees — who are particularly vulnerable to this type of violence, which is often used as a tactic to induce displacement — is of concern to the Council. Chile is organizing, together with Australia and with the support of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, an Arria formula meeting on the protection of internally displaced persons on 30 May.

Chile supports the systematic inclusion of the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence and its follow-up in the relevant country-specific resolutions and in the mandates of special political and peacekeeping missions. These missions, commissions of inquiry and other related mechanisms should consider including women protection advisers. We also look forward to the possibility of including this issue in the work of the monitoring bodies of the relevant Security Council sanctions.

As the Secretary-General recommends, we urge the consideration of the links between conflict-related sexual violence and the illicit trade in natural resources, as well as such illegal activities as the illicit drugs trade and the traffic in persons covered by the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, its protocols and relevant legal instruments.

We stress the importance of deepening the exchange of information among the system's actors and strengthening the training of all peacekeeping personnel using innovative tools, among others, those of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict and the corresponding United Nations initiative. We encourage the international community and donors to support the prevention and eradication of the scourge through the United Nations Action Multi-Partner Trust Fund.

At the regional level, in July 2013 Chile's Joint Peacekeeping Operations Centre, together with the United States Naval Postgraduate School, organized a seminar in Santiago on theme "Women, peace and security: new challenges to implementation of resolution 1325 (2000)", with the participation of regional professionals. It included training in gender-based sexual violence and resolution 2106 (2013), inter alia. At the national level, the Centre's 2014 curriculum addresses resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions and the prevention of abuse and sexual exploitation, with a focus on the norms expected of peacekeeping personnel.

Sexual violence continues to be used to humiliate opponents in conflict, as a form of torture, to inflict injury, to extract information, to stigmatize, degrade and intimidate, to destroy communities, to displace communities and groups from their land, and to intentionally spread HIV or reward fighters. We cannot continue to ignore the scourge and reiterate our firm determination to implement resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions on such violence, while supporting efforts towards its prompt eradication and the healing and reintegration of victims and survivors.