

Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Resolution 1888
Wednesday, 30 September, 2009

Statement by H.E. Mr. Urbina, Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations

Madam President, Costa Rica recognizes your personal leadership and the efforts that your country has made in seeking to combat sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. We believe that the adoption of this new resolution is another firm step in the path that we began last year with resolution 1820 (2008) to stop the use of sexual violence as a weapon of war.

Costa Rica's position on this subject was made clear in the thematic open debate held on 7 August this year. For that reason, I will limit myself to highlighting only two points. The first point concerns the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and, the second, the team of experts we are establishing in this resolution 1888 (2009).

The appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General to combat sexual violence will, without a doubt, play a strategic role in providing visibility to this fundamental issue and, above all, in helping to organize concerted action to combat sexual violence in situations of armed conflict.

We believe that it is necessary to harmonize this provisional mechanism with the setting up of the new composite gender entity established by the General Assembly in resolution 63/311, in order to avoid duplication and overlapping of functions. We believe that the Special Representative should be at the head of the United Nations campaign against sexual violence in conflict situations, UN Action, in order to make better use of the existing resources and capacities of the Organization. We hope that the enthusiasm generated by the establishment of this new instrument can be translated into tangible contributions to equip it with the necessary capacity to live up to the high expectations we all have for it.

In relation to the team of experts, we deem it extremely timely to create such an entity on the basis of such successful initiatives as the United Nations Standing Police Capacity. We deem such strategic interventions and technical assistance to be of utmost use in helping States to establish their own mechanisms to address the problem of sexual violence. We believe that it would be useful to assess the possibility of complementing and expanding these early and rapid response capacities with technical assistance for the strengthening of the rule of law and security sector reform.

In conclusion, I should like, on behalf of the Human Security Network, which is comprised of Austria, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, with South Africa as an observer, to express our gratification at the conclusion of the process that led to the adoption of this new resolution. As we said in our statement on 7 August, we commend the progress that the Security Council has made in its thematic discussions on this topic, and reiterate our conviction that it is necessary to continue working towards a comprehensive and strategic approach focused on the critical areas of prevention, protection, the participation of women, accountability, assistance to victims and data collection, which we discussed in detail at our most recent debate on this topic.