

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

Statement by H.E Mr. Viličić, Representative of Croatia to the United Nations

Allow me first to thank you personally, Madam President, and the United States delegation and Ambassador Susan Rice for the continuing leadership on the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his steady engagement.

Croatia would like to add its voice to those who strive to put an end to that abhorrent practice. Since the representative of Croatia delivered a speech during the open debate on the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008) in August this year (S/PV.6180, p.16), allow me here merely to add some brief remarks.

First and foremost, I would like to state that Croatia was a strong supporter of resolution 1820 (2008) within the Council, from its conceptual phase to its ultimate adoption. In that same vein, we now give equal support to the new resolution 1888 (2009) that we have just adopted today, and we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate everyone who has worked so hard to gain that result.

With resolution 1888 (2009), the Security Council recognizes many important elements in the fight against sexual violence in armed conflict. It recognizes the need for civilian and military leaders to demonstrate political will in combating impunity and using their authority and powers to prevent sexual violence. It demands protection for civilians from sexual violence by all parties to an armed conflict and urges them to investigate all reports of sexual violence.

The members of the Security Council have had the opportunity to visit today's most affected areas and to talk to victims, and are fully aware of gravity of the problem. Moreover, the Security Council has reiterated its intention, when adopting or renewing targeted sanctions, to consider including designation criteria pertaining to acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence.

Notwithstanding those positive measures, we believe that the resolution's request to the Secretary-General to appoint a Special Representative to address the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict, as well as to rapidly deploy a team of experts to situations of particular concern with respect to sexual violence, deserves special praise.

In adopting resolution 1888 (2009), as well as through the recently adopted resolution 1882 (2009), the Security Council is sending a clear signal to those who continue to perpetrate horrific crimes against women and girls in armed conflict and to those who tolerate or condone such sexual violence. They will be held accountable.