

Security Council Open Debate on the Implementation of Resolution 1325

(2000) on Women, Peace and Security

Wednesday 29 October 2008

Statement by Ambassador Carsten Staur,
Permanent Representative of Denmark to the UN



Mr. President,

Allow me to open my statement by thanking the Presidency for the constructive concept paper for this open debate of the Security Council. It is very important that the Security Council focus on women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, which is a main element of resolution 1325. I fully associate myself with the statement by the Permanent Representative of France on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. President,

The latest report of the Secretary-General (of 26 September 2008) states that progress has been made in incorporating gender perspectives in national policies, raising awareness, developing programmatic tools and enhancing women's participation in conflict prevention, peace processes, peace building, peace keeping operations and security sector reforms and in combating sexual violence.

That is positive - but the report also confirms existing institutional and organizational gaps and challenges in the implementation of the resolution. In the report, a specific assessment is made of the protection of women in particular against sexual and gender based violence, and the report notes that despite efforts by the UN, violence against women persists, and there is an urgent need for increased efforts to prosecute perpetrators.

The report also refers to the June open debate at ministerial level on women, peace and security which focused on sexual violence in situations of armed conflict. The Council unanimously adopted resolution 1820 stressing that sexual violence as a tactic of war can significantly exacerbate situations of armed conflict. It demands all parties to immediately protect civilians from all forms of sexual violence and affirms the Council's attention to consider targeted sanctions against perpetrators.

Denmark co-sponsored this resolution. Women and girls are especially vulnerable to sexual abuse during violent conflict and post-conflict situations. The use of often systematic gender based violence as a strategy of war, impunity of the perpetrators and the absence of gender justice are challenges that urgently need to be addressed.

So far, we have experienced limited international focus on the protection of women as victims – and, even less, focus on their rights to participate as well as on their potential resources, all of which should be at the center of our attention. We need to change that.

Mr. President,

The potential contributions of women in prevention of conflicts, resolution of conflicts, peace building and reconstruction in post-conflict situation can hardly be overestimated.

Implementation of Resolution 1325 is thus of the utmost importance. It is now eight years since this Council called for women's participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security. Since then the Security Council has often reiterated the need to promote equal participation by the UN system, by member states and by all other relevant actors.

By the end of the day, it is the results that count. So, where are we now, eight years later? Have we really increased the participation of women in conflict solution and peace building? We don't really know. Satisfactory data are still missing. What we do know, however, is that we are still facing a vital challenge.

Mr. President,

Denmark was one of the very first countries to formulate a national action plan for implementing resolution 1325. The plan has now been revised, in an all-of-government approach and with comprehensive cooperation of the Danish society. The first objective of the plan is to achieve greater active participation of women in peace building at international and local level.

We strongly believe – and various studies support this – that sustainable peace demands active involvement of women at all levels. National plans for implementation of SCR 1325 will for sure contribute to improved solutions to the challenges we face.

We have an obligation, all of us, to move much faster to promote and safeguard the rights of women to participate in shaping actions towards equitable peace.

Thank you Mr. President.