

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
October 28 2011, Security Council Chamber

Statement by H.E. Mr. Kolga, Representative of the Estonia

My delegation fully aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the representative of the European Union. At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General for the encouraging remarks he made this morning.

For a start, I would like to emphasize that women's security is part of overall peace and security and that women can contribute to peace processes and are very able to do so. Here, I would like to use the same quotation of Aristotle that the Estonian President used during the General Assembly's general debate this year (see A/66/PV.11, p. 47). Aristotle noted that where the state of women is bad, almost half of human life is spoiled. That is no less true today — and it will remain so. I therefore welcome this Security Council debate to discuss women's participation and role in conflict prevention and mediation. The involvement of women in peacekeeping operations and conflict prevention is of the utmost importance to ensure the success of the operations, as it is the only way to reach the whole population.

In October of last year Estonia adopted its first National Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and its follow-up resolutions, which sets out our priorities for the future. We are now in the process of reviewing the implementation of the Action Plan over the past year. The purpose of the National Action Plan is to ensure that Estonia's international military and civil contributions and development cooperation take women's needs systematically into account. It contains commitments to include the gender perspective in those activities.

One of the countries closely connected to the implementation of our Action Plan has been Afghanistan, where NATO and Estonia have jointly endeavoured to promote the involvement and advancement of women. In November 2010, Estonia organized an international conference, entitled "Women, Peace and Security — the Afghan View", focused on the cooperation between national and international contributors.

The National Action Plan also includes Estonia's commitments regarding resolution 1325 (2000) that stem from our role as a contributor to international peace and security through our active participation in international civilian and military operations, as a donor country and a member of the European Union, NATO, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the United Nations.

The Action Plan also seeks to raise general awareness and interest in gender-related issues in our own society and to increase gender-related expertise. We support women's participation in posts related to peace and security and will take further steps to increase women's participation in military, police and rescue services. In the future, we would like to integrate the gender perspective into our pre-mission training even more. It is also our aim to consider gender-related issues during the general training of officers and non-commissioned officers.

At the international level, we want resolution 1325 (2000) to remain an important political subject in the United Nations, OSCE, the European Union and NATO in an ongoing way. We welcome the United Nations strategic results framework and the set of indicators on women and peace and security, which guide the implementation of resolutions, and we also welcome the comprehensive report on the NATO/ Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council policy on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions. In addition, we believe that the International Criminal Court has an important role to play in ending impunity in crimes against women.

Finally, let me note our appreciation of the work of Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN-Women, whose leadership in that role is of crucial importance to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We also expect that UN-Women will play an active role in helping to turn the principles of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security from words on paper into reality. I would also like to extend our appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict for their involvement.