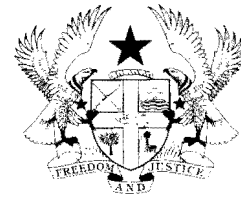


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STATEMENT

BY

H.E. MR. LESLIE K. CHRISTIAN
AMBASSADOR & PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE

AT THE

SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE

ON

WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY

New York, 29th October, 2008

Mr. President,

I would like to commend China, for organizing this open debate on Women, Peace and Security.

Women and girls who have played little or no part in creating armed conflict continue to be victims of grave forms of sexual violence and assault and suffer the worst forms of hardships and displacement during warfare.

Notwithstanding these abuses, women contribute meaningfully towards efforts at mediation, reconciliation, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and rebuilding national institutions. We recognize that some commendable efforts have been made on policy, norms setting and reforms and institutional development. But we have still not arrived at the situation where the equality and empowerment of women can be assured could be assured.

Mr. President,

One of the crucial objectives of Resolution 1325 (2000) is gender mainstreaming in all aspects of peace and security. Its realization, calls for deliberate, purposeful and sustained interventions especially on the part of member states, with the active collaboration and support of the United Nations and other relevant actors.

Mr. President,

In order to develop long-term strategies to increase women's participation, we should focus considerable attention on the following fundamental issues:

Member States and the United Nations should adopt targeted gender-related activities into strategies and programmes on peace and security by for example, increasing the number of women considered for UN peacekeeping operations. It is indeed beyond doubt that the deployment of female military and police personnel facilitates outreach to women in the local communities.

Ghana participates in **nine** United Nations peacekeeping operations and currently stands as the highest contributor of women to military peacekeeping operations, contributing about **12%** of the total number of female military personnel. We believe in the beneficial effect of women peacekeepers in post-conflict countries and would therefore, strive to deploy more women police and military personnel. To ensure that peacekeepers are informed and better resourced to address gender-specific challenges facing women in the post-

conflict period, our national strategy also underlines the importance of pre-deployment training on gender for peacekeepers.

Mr. President,

Linkages should be established between the activities carried out by the UN system and efforts by Member States to implement resolution 1325 (2000), particularly in conflict and post conflict situations.

We should also ensure the creation of effective institutional arrangements that would not only guarantee the protection of women and girls but also enhance their full and equal participation in peace processes, including negotiations and decision-making.

Civil society should be mobilized and involved actively in the implementation of the resolution 1325, because its members have an important role to play as advocates, activists and programme implementors in building the necessary political will to bring about real change.

Efficient monitoring and accountability mechanisms should be engaged to ensure sustainability of positive changes in the situation and role of women in conflict and post conflict countries.

Mr. President,

The critical role of member states in the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 cannot be overstated as national ownership is a prerequisite for the success of gender mainstreaming activities over the longer term. National ownership also enhances prospects of mobilizing the support of civil society groups while enhancing the impact of international assistance. We must take responsibility for this resolution and all that it asks of us. It is easy to request the UN to act but as member states we should also acknowledge what is required of us to ensure the effective implementation of resolution 1325.

I thank you **Mr. President.**