



STATEMENT BY MR. HARDEEP SINGH PURI, PERMANENT  
REPRESENTATIVE, ON WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY AT THE  
SECURITY COUNCIL ON OCTOBER 05, 2009

Mr. President,

Let me begin by congratulating you for assuming the Presidency of the Security Council.

We are happy to participate in today's open debate on "Women and Peace and Security". The theme of today's discussion "responding to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security" is both timely and pertinent. India attaches very high importance to ensuring concrete action in this area and welcomes the report of the Secretary-General.

Mr. President,

We had co-sponsored UN Security Council Resolution 1888, which was adopted last week under the Presidency of the United States, and we are also happy to co-sponsor the resolution 1889 adopted today.

Nevertheless, let me underscore that the issue of "Women and Peace and Security" has implications which are cross-cutting as well as multi-dimensional. Therefore, the need for discussing these issues in the universal forum, the General Assembly, cannot be over-emphasized.

India has consistently held that greater participation of women in areas of conflict prevention, peace negotiations, peace keeping and post conflict reconstruction is the *sine qua non* for lasting peace and security.

As far as the UN is concerned, its achievements have been at best modest, particularly in terms of deployment of women in peacekeeping forces. Women, presently, comprise only 8 percent of UN police officers, and about 2 percent of the military personnel deployed in UN peacekeeping operations. Given the critical role of the UN in peacekeeping operations and peace building in post-conflict countries, we firmly believe that the UN must lead by example. Precisely for these reasons, India has contributed a female peacekeeping unit of 100 personnel, which is presently deployed in Liberia. This mission in Liberia stands out as the only one of its kind among the ongoing UN peacekeeping operations.

Mr. President,

We commend the work of Secretary-General in mainstreaming the gender perspective in the UN recruitment process. We hope that this process will be institutionalised at the earliest and that we achieve a gender balance in the UN system, especially in the field, where it is most required. There is also much need for ensuring greater representation of women in high decision-making positions at the UN.

Mr. President,

It is a matter of deep regret that the international community has to repeatedly debate the issue of sexual and other forms of violence against women and girls in situations of armed conflict. This abhorrent behaviour has to be unequivocally, unambiguously and resolutely condemned, whether perpetrated by parties to armed conflicts, peacekeeping personnel, including its civilian component, or humanitarian actors.

Mr President,

The promotion and protection of the human rights of women and girls in armed conflict continue to pose a pressing challenge. There should be no tolerance for gender based violence. All cases of gender based violence in an armed conflict must be investigated and the perpetrators prosecuted.

Let me assure you that India will continue to contribute positively to United Nations efforts in protecting vulnerable sections, particularly women and children, in conflict and post-conflict societies. This needs to be done in a comprehensive manner with active involvement of all the Departments and Agencies of the United Nations. I would also like to stress that the international community needs to enhance cooperation by providing new and additional financial resources, sharing of experiences, expertise and capacity building in areas of justice and rule of law.

Thank You.

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