

Press Release

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**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR FUMIKO SAIGA
REPRESENTATIVE OF JAPAN
AT THE OPEN MEETING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL
ON "WOMEN, PEACE, AND SECURITY"
UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK
28 OCTOBER 2002**

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation for this opportunity to present the views of Japan at this open meeting to commemorate the second anniversary of the historic adoption of resolution 1325. I also pay tribute to President of the Security Council, Ambassador Belinga-Eboutou of Cameroon for demonstrating his commitment to this agenda item by convening today's meeting.

I welcome the report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security as well as the study prepared by his Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women in cooperation with the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security. The recommendations contained in the study will provide useful general guidance in strengthening international efforts for the protection of women and girls under armed conflict, the promotion of women's participation in peace-building, and the integration of gender perspectives in peace processes and conflict resolution. I also look forward to the field-based assessment by the two independent experts under the auspices of UNIFEM, to be issued later this week.

Mr. President,

Today, I would like to offer three general comments on the Special Adviser's study.

First, I would like to underscore the importance of education, training, and capacity-building which is repeatedly stressed in various contexts throughout the study. Education and public awareness are key to preventing violence against women and girls, and the training and capacity-building of women are critical to increasing their participation in various aspects of a peace process. Japan's strong belief in women's education is reflected, for example, in the economic assistance it has provided to Afghanistan for the rehabilitation of a damaged girls' elementary school in Kabul last April, and for the construction of a vocational training center for women.

The second point I wish to make is that, while the 78 recommendations in the study provide useful general guidance, it is necessary to formulate detailed strategies for translating them into concrete actions and for following them up on a regular basis. This will require ongoing discussion by Member States and the Secretariat. Japan, for its part, would like to suggest that the Security Council, in consultation with interested Member States, formulate a "road-map", identifying which agencies are to assume responsibility for what kinds of actions, in which areas, and according to what timetable.

Third, it is my delegation's view that, since the recommendations cover such a wide range of areas, implementation and follow-up should not be left solely to the Security Council, but should involve the United Nations system as a whole. My delegation therefore hopes that the Inter-Agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security will continue its efforts to strengthen coordination and collaboration among the various United Nations agencies. At the same time, let us not forget that the issue of "women, peace and security" is intricately intertwined with two other issues, namely "children in armed conflict" and "the protection of civilians under armed conflict", which the Council has considered in recent years. Japan therefore believes that the Council, the United Nations primary organ for the maintenance of international

peace and security, should address all three of these issues in an integrated manner. At the same time, the offices within the Secretariat responsible for these issues, namely the Office of the Special Adviser of Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, should collaborate more closely and identify best practices among their activities.

Mr. President,

Today's open meeting demonstrates the importance which the Security Council attaches to the issue of women, peace and security, and provides us with a valuable opportunity to exchange our views on the issue. But, the issue of gender mainstreaming in peace and security is too important to be considered just once a year on a special occasion. Indeed, it should be integrated into the ongoing discussions and activities throughout the United Nations system, including the Security Council. Japan would therefore like to engage other interested Member States as well as the Secretariat in substantive discussions aimed at implementing the recommendations contained in the study.

Thank you very much.