



*Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations*

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Statement by Ambassador Yukio Takasu,  
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Open Debate on Women and Peace and Security

Security Council  
5 October 2009

Mr. President,

Thank you for organizing today's debate. I would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General and the representatives of UN offices and NGOs for their useful briefings. Their dedication to promoting the role of women in peace and security is greatly appreciated.

Nine years ago, the strong voices of women all over the world guided the Security Council to adopt landmark resolution 1325. We have witnessed positive developments since then. However, we cannot fail to see that so many innocent women and children live under fear and want in conflict and post-conflict situations. Clearly, much remains to be done. Japan therefore welcomes the decision of the Council to adopt resolution 1889.

Mr. President,

I would like to address three issues: the role of women in the political process, the protection of women and ending impunity, and the human security approach in empowering women in conflict and post-conflict situations.

(Women in the peace process)

First, it is vitally important to ensure that women's perspectives and the particular needs of women and girls are reflected at every stage of the peace process. We need to promote full and equal engagement of women, from the earliest stages of the process of peace negotiations and peace-building. This is the most effective way to prevent recurrence of conflict.



We welcome that three women are now serving as Head of UN Missions. Women are playing indispensable roles in some of the peace-keeping operations such as the Indian Force Police Unit (FPU) in Liberia. The PBC, for its part, incorporated a gender perspective in its country-specific peace-building strategy.

We should encourage the Secretary-General and heads of international and regional organizations to appoint more women to decision-making positions and as high-level mediators and members of negotiating teams.

(Protection of women and end of impunity)

Second, we must protect women and children who are forced into vulnerable situations. In particular, we must extend support to women suffering from the consequences of conflict by working to provide them with greater physical security.

The Security Council has mandated many UN peace-keeping missions to respond to violence against civilians, and especially against women and children.

The Council should continue to explore as to how UN missions can better protect women and children in conflict, with adequate resources, training and logistical support. We wish that the importance of protection of women is fully incorporated into training programs for peacekeepers and peace-building experts on the ground. It is important to attach higher priority to the protection of women in mission planning and to strengthen the Gender Units through the placement of gender advisors.

It is totally unacceptable that perpetrators of sexual and other serious violence against women and girls are shielded by a culture of impunity. Many of them continue to serve as high-ranking officials in armed forces or groups.

The culture of impunity is a direct threat to women's security, and it also hinders women from the vital role they might otherwise play in post-conflict peace-building efforts.

We need to redouble our efforts to end impunity by assisting countries in strengthening political leadership and the rule of law. Targeted sanction measures should be effectively utilized.

We hope that the newly appointed SRSG in accordance with resolution 1888 will take a strong lead in addressing this serious issue.

(Empowerment of women through human security approach)

Third, we need to focus not only on protection of women as victims but also on the empowerment of women who could be strong promoters of the peace-building process.

We must find a way to ensure the empowerment of women in post-conflict situations, by improving their socio-economic conditions.

This can be achieved by promoting access to health services, education, vocational training, income generation activities and land and property rights.

Unless we succeed in creating such conditions, I am afraid that it will be difficult to consolidate peace and prevent the recurrence of another conflict.

This is a major challenge the Council must address. We are therefore pleased that the recently adopted resolution 1889 stressed the importance of empowering women and girls in responding to their particular needs in post-conflict situations.

In this regard, I would like to emphasize that the human security approach provides valuable guidelines to both protect people's lives and dignity from serious threats and empower them to realize their full potential.

One good example of the application of this approach is mentioned in the Secretary-General's latest report. The project is funded through UN Trust Fund for Human Security to deliver health care, education and counseling to women and girls in Nepal who have been left vulnerable by conflict in that country.

In closing, I would like to recall the suggestion I made at the last occasion to compile a handbook with a list of good practices on women's participation in the process of reconciliation and peace-building. I would be grateful if appropriate follow-up is made by the Secretariat.

Thank you, Mr. President.