

Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Council, April 2014, Security Council Chamber
Statement by Mr. Oh Joon Permanent Mission of Republic of Korea to the United Nations.

I thank you, Madam, for convening today's important debate. I would like to express my delegation's sincere appreciation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Special Representative Zainab Hawa Bangura and non-governmental organization representative Rhoda Misaka for their briefings and statements.

We have made progress over the past several years in combatting conflict-related sexual violence. Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) in particular, a gender perspective has been increasingly integrated into key United Nations mandates.

In spite of those institutional gains, sexual violence in conflict remains one of the most egregious forms of human rights violations. Its impact goes far beyond an individual victim's pain and stigma. Even more troubling is the fact that sexual violence is often used as a tactic of armed conflict. As noted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2014/181), sexual violence is wielded to attack specific ethnic and religious groups, used to displace civilians and unleashed to encourage predatory behaviour. The international community must scale up its collective efforts to combat the scourge, especially in the three areas of prevention, protection and prosecution.

First, we must strengthen the prevention of conflict-related sexual violence, establishing legal frameworks, promoting improved governance and the rule of law and raising public awareness; those are just some examples of the concrete actions we need to take. In that way, we believe that the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, to be held in London in June, will provide an opportunity to mobilize political commitments and promote public awareness. In addition, the participation of women together with the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in conflict resolution and peace processes should be ensured. Women can and must play multiple roles during periods of armed conflicts, as they often demonstrate resilience and ingenuity in the face of extreme adversity.

Secondly, we should pay increased attention to the protection of women facing rape, sexual slavery and other forms sexual violence in conflict. Building the capacity of national institutions and promoting relevant legislation and resource allocation are prerequisites for providing sustainable assistance to victims and survivors. At the same time, we must enhance international frameworks and tangible measures to protect women suffering from sexual violence in conflict. In that regard, we recognize the crucial role of peacekeeping operations and women protection advisers.

Thirdly, the politics of impunity should be terminated through the investigation and prosecution of perpetrators of sexual violence. We cannot eradicate conflict-related sexual violence completely without bringing those responsible to justice. We note the contributions of the Team of Experts-Rule of Law/Sexual Violence in Conflict in building national capacity and expanding expertise in addressing impunity. The international justice system, including the International Criminal Court, should also play a leading role in ensuring accountability.

To conclude, the Republic of Korea as a strong supporter of resolution 1325 (2000) and the preventing sexual violence initiative reaffirms its commitment to international efforts to combat sexual-related violence.