

Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Council, April 17th 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Sparber, Permanent Mission of Liechtenstein to the United Nations.

We welcome the second report of the Secretary-General entitled “Sexual violence in conflict” (S/2013/149), which updates us on the widespread use of sexual violence as a method of warfare in various situations. Let me also commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura, and her office, for their great dedication in operationalizing and implementing important mandates deriving from resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010).

My delegation aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Canada, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, in particular with its call for increased accountability for acts of conflict-related sexual violence, which is best done by enhancing support for the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in establishing the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements on conflict-related sexual violence mandated in resolution 1960 (2010). We also support the Secretary-General’s recommendation to put in place an appropriate Security Council mechanism or procedure for systematically monitoring commitments by parties listed in the annex of its report.

There is a clear and obvious link between the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and gender-based violence in conflict and post-conflict situations. There is ample evidence that small arms facilitate a vast spectrum of human rights violations, including rape and other forms of sexual violence. Liechtenstein therefore welcomes the fact that the Arms Trade Treaty includes the risk of gender-based violence and violence against women and children as one of the criteria that exporting States need to consider before authorizing an arms export. We are particularly pleased that the risk assessment provided for in the Treaty not only covers small arms and light weapons, but also ammunition, munitions, parts and components.

We agree with the Secretary-General’s statement that States are primarily responsible for holding individuals to account for sexual and gender-based violence. However, when national jurisdictions are unwilling or unable to fulfil their responsibilities in that regard, the International Criminal Court (ICC) in particular has a complementary role to play. Bringing to justice the perpetrators of sexual violence is an important step for victims seeking to move on with their lives. We are therefore pleased that the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Ms. Fatou Bensouda, has made the fight against sexual violence a focus of her work. The fact that crimes of sexual violence play a role in nearly every case under investigation and prosecution by the Court speaks both to the startling prevalence of sexual violence in armed conflicts today and to the emphasis placed by the ICC on holding perpetrators of those crimes accountable. The voluntary surrender to the ICC by Bosco Ntanganda, whose name has been associated with sexual and gender-based crimes in the Democratic Republic of the Congo for many years, is an important message for victims — in the end, justice will be done.

Delivering justice for victims of sexual violence also includes reparative justice. Liechtenstein is a proud donor to the ICC’s Trust Fund for Victims, which adopts a gender perspective in all its activities and conducts programmes specifically aimed at assisting victims of sexual and gender-based violence. Having been ordered to provide reparations for the victims of Thomas Lubanga Dyilo, in the light of the sexual violence those victims have suffered, the Trust Fund will now for the first time fulfil the promise of reparative justice contained in the Rome Statute.

My delegation is a long-standing supporter of the consistent mainstreaming of the Council’s thematic

agenda into its country-specific work. In partnership with Switzerland, we have supported the publication of the 2010 *Women, Peace and Security Handbook* by PeaceWomen, which has just been released in a second edition. To increase its usability, we made the handbook available as a mobile application. The handbook makes the complex women, peace and security agenda accessible by breaking it down into specific topics. In addition, an overview of the Council's most relevant previously agreed language has been included so as to ensure that the Council integrates its own decisions on women, peace and security into its country-specific work. It could thereby serve as a practical tool for the drafters of Council resolutions. We hope that Council members will continue making good use of it.