

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, November 30th 2012,
Security Council Chamber

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

At the outset, let me join others in commending you, Mr. President, for having organized this open debate, which highlights in particular the crucial role of women's civil society organizations in contributing to the prevention and resolution of armed conflict and peacebuilding.

We welcome the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/732), which reveals the lagging participation of women in mediation efforts and preventive diplomacy.

The slow progress made in ensuring the adequate participation of women in peace talks and the inclusion of women's and girls' rights in peace agreements remains worrisome. Of the nine peace agreements signed in 2012, only two contain provisions in that regard — the same low percentage as in 2010. Peace accords that fail to ensure the engagement of women in post-conflict governance often neglect their access to economic opportunities, justice and reparations.

When sexual violence is not addressed in the early stages of mediation, such as in ceasefire agreements, it usually remains ignored throughout the whole peace process. We therefore call on the Security Council and all relevant actors to increase efforts to promote women's participation in peace negotiations and mediation and to meet the specific concerns of women during post conflict reconstruction. The Security Council should also, hand in hand with the General Assembly, address the lack of women as lead peace mediators, including by encouraging the Secretary-General to appoint women to such positions and to ensure that adequate gender expertise is provided in peace processes.

Women's civil society organizations are an important asset in this regard. We must ensure that their unique grass-roots perspective is taken into account as we rethink how gender expertise is structured and deployed in the United Nations system. My delegation therefore welcomes the adoption of the presidential statement, which highlights the important role of women's civil society organizations in this area.

My delegation has long advocated for the consistent mainstreaming of the Council's thematic agenda into its country-specific work. A study recently published by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security reveals the inconsistency with which the Council addresses women, peace and security concerns in its decisions on country situations. We believe that Council members should make greater efforts to ensure that their country-specific experts receive the information necessary to address those concerns in relevant mission mandates.

To support such efforts, my delegation has undertaken various initiatives. In partnership with Switzerland, we supported the publication of a handbook on the women and peace and security agenda by PeaceWomen. The handbook has just been released in its second edition and is available at the entrance to this Chamber. And I am particularly pleased to inform the Council that my delegation will launch, in close partnership with the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination at Princeton University and with PeaceWomen, a series of panel discussions dealing with different aspects of the women and peace and security agenda. The first such event at United Nations Headquarters will take place on 12 December in Conference Room 1 at 3 p.m. The Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Ms. Fatou Bensouda, will speak there about the work of the Court to prevent and prosecute sexual and gender based crimes.