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# PHILIPPINES

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**SCR 1325: WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY**

Open debate at the Security Council  
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Mr. President,

Through you, allow me to first of all thank our speakers today for their comprehensive presentations. The short video presentation earlier has also shown us the multiplier effect that results from the protection and empowerment of women as active agents of peace and as effective peacebuilders. Security Council resolution 1325 is not merely a resolution; it is a movement wherein women's participation in securing peace has been acknowledged as a critical factor of success in conflict prevention and resolution.

Mr. President,

There is still a huge gap when it comes to making women part of building peace in the public and official sense. We need to make the flesh and spirit of 1325 tangible on the ground.

In the Philippines, the gender dimension of conflict is being addressed, particularly in peace negotiations and peace and development efforts. To ensure that the voices of women are heard, the Government's peace panels included two women in the negotiating team. In the Southern part of the country, the Mindanao Commission on Women has formulated a Mindanao women position paper on the Government-Moro Islamic Liberation Front peace agreement. Recently, women leaders in Mindanao have been pursuing projects to empower the women of Southern Philippines to be channels for the respect of cultural diversity and the building of a more inclusive Mindanao society. The Philippines' framework in dealing with the issue of women and conflict treads three areas: **first**, ensuring the protection of women's human rights—by addressing violence against women, providing health services, and promoting human rights education; **second**, economic empowerment—by urgently addressing lack of access to water, electricity and other basic needs, as well as stimulating economic opportunities for women; and **third**, effective governance—by promoting awareness of gender and peace concerns among local government units and improving the participation of women in decision-making processes. In short, the fundamental strategy of the Philippines for pursuing resolution 1325 lies in enabling more women to *systematically* participate in conflict prevention, management, resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding, while at the same time, rehabilitating their communities and ensuring basic services and livelihood. The Philippine government ensures the full participation of women in local peace processes by building capacities and mobilizing peace constituencies. For example, women in indigenous communities are serving as intermediaries in local peace dialogues and as mediators in the restoration of broken peace pacts. They are also engaged in mobilizing community participation in the formulation of ancestral domain development plans and reconciliation processes.

Mr. President,

We would also like to add that the Philippines is particularly encouraged to note the findings of a recent national survey on the Filipino people's perception of women as peacemakers. A principal finding of the survey is that a majority of Filipinos believe in the statement "*a successful peace process in Mindanao needs participation from women as from men*". The same statistical study also shows that both Filipino men and women, nationwide share the same strong advocacy for women's representation in government peace panels. Also interesting is the conclusion that over half of the nationwide sample agrees that "*a woman has more talent than a man to find a way to settle a conflict without resorting to violence*".

Mr. President,

The Philippines welcomes the establishment of a UN system-wide action plan to implement resolution 1325 which has been explained comprehensively by Ms. Mayanja, the Secretary General's Gender Adviser. We note that many of the components of this action are not entirely new and have already been operational for some time. What is new about the plan, however, is the orchestration of all the actions towards realizing 1325. This action plan is valuable not only in providing a coherent picture of our efforts in achieving 1325, but also in pinpointing areas that we might have missed and functions that could be overlapping. The system-wide action plan would therefore contribute much to the efficiency and accountability of the UN system on gender mainstreaming in the field of peace and conflict resolution.

Mr. President,

The Philippines believes that the system-wide action plan is but a means to an end. Member States, led by Security Council members, must be conscious of the critical transition from the gains of gender mainstreaming in peacekeeping missions to the achievement of sustainable capacities at the local level. The action plan must therefore function as a vehicle to transplant investments in gender mainstreaming long after the peace missions have dissolved. It would therefore be important for UN field presence to be in close contact with national and local authorities, as well as with local NGOs to ensure that gender mainstreaming successes filter through to the most basic governance and civil structures.

As developments on the ground continue to be fluid, the Philippines would like to see the action plan used also as a tool for gathering accurate information on the status of women in conflict areas, including the scope and gravity of gender-based violence and the progress on the empowerment of women in the area of peace and security. Certainly, this information would serve to guide the Council on the way forward on implementation and monitoring. The action plan should also remain responsive to changes in the environment and should be updated, as necessary.

Mr. President,

The Philippines looks forward to the establishment of the proposed Peacebuilding Commission; resolution 1325 should be among the basic pillars of its work. Essential to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission would be its coordination with civil society, including women's organizations, both at the headquarters level and at the country level.

The current state of restructuring and rationalizing of the both the organization and the work of the UN presents a rare opportunity to boost the work of mainstreaming gender in peace efforts. The Philippines will continue to contribute to the work of strengthening the gender perspective in all stages of the peace building process.

Thank you.

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