

# PORTUGAL

Security Council Open Debate on  
“Women and Peace and Security”

Statement by  
H.E. Ambassador José Filipe Moraes Cabral  
Permanent Representative of Portugal to the United Nations

New York, 5 October 2009



Thank you Mr. President,

Let me start by joining others in thanking you, Mr. President, for holding this open debate on this very important matter.

I also would like to thank [the Deputy Secretary General, Ms. Asha-Rose Migiro, the Special Adviser of the SG, Ms. Rachel Mayanja, the Executive Director of UNIFEM Ms. Ines Alberdi] for their fruitful and comprehensive interventions.

Portugal naturally concurs with the statement delivered earlier by Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. President,

The adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000 represented a landmark in the promotion and protection of human rights. It brought to the attention of this organ to the pressing issue of gender equality and empowerment of women, but it also made clear that women have a role to play in conflict situations – besides being victims – as peacemakers and peacekeepers.

It is Portugal's belief that equal participation of women and men in decision making processes has a positive impact in the international security system, thus favoring the implementation of the SC objectives: peace and security. At the same time, it is fundamental to develop policies that envisage the promotion of women's political, economic and social roles in post-conflict situations.

It is undeniable that situations of conflict have a great impact on women. They are too often victims of violence, of sexual violence used as a weapon of war, and at the same time they become, very often too, the main providers of economic security and survival to their families, as heads of households. There is thus the need to ensure that in post-conflict situations we build also on their experiences.

Mr. President,

Portugal reaffirms its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325. We have adopted last August our national plan of action to contribute to the implementation of this document at the national, regional and international policy levels.

The drafting of this National Plan of Action involved a one-year long participatory process, which encompassed wide-range governmental contributions together with wide and public consultations with Universities, NGOs, media and other relevant civil society sectors and international networks.

Our National Plan recognizes the specific impacts of contemporary wars in the lives of women and addresses the efforts to prevent, combat and mitigate these impacts.

The plan (2009-2013) is built around the objectives of strengthening women's participation and representation in all efforts to promote peace and security; promoting gender mainstreaming in the sectors of security (peacekeeping missions, security system reform), justice and development aid; and reinforcing protection of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict areas.

In what concerns the content of our Plan, I will briefly highlight five main objectives:

- 1) To increase women's participation and mainstream gender equality in all phases of peacebuilding processes and at all levels of decision-making.
- 2) To promote capacity building on gender equality and gender-based violence, as well as other aspects covered by UNSCR 1325 and 1820 for all those involved in peacebuilding and development aid efforts.
- 3) To promote and protect women's human rights in conflict areas and post-conflict scenarios, taking into account the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence and the promotion of the empowerment of women.
- 4) To invest in and disseminate knowledge on issues concerning women, peace and security, including awareness raising among decision-makers and the broader public.
- 5) To ensure the participation of civil society in the implementation of Resolution 1325 and the national plan of action.

Our National Plan embodies Portugal's concern with the vulnerability of women and girls in post-conflict situations, together with our national commitment to develop measures to answer the needs of women in these situations. In concrete terms, this is translated, at the international level, in the promotion of policies, strategies and legislation to prevent armed violence, including domestic armed violence, as well as in the systematic integration in development programmes of a gender dimension and training for development actors in this field.

Furthermore, the National PoA emphasizes that women and girls are relevant and capable actors of change and development and is based on the conviction that i) it is fundamental to overcome the traditional perspective of women and girls as being exclusively vulnerable victims in need of protection, ii) that it is thus essential to implement measures that guarantee that this perspective is taken into consideration at all levels of peacebuilding processes by the international and local actors involved.

Furthermore, the Portuguese Government interprets this resolution as extending beyond armed conflicts and humanitarian aid to include the promotion of policy coherence at a national level concerning issues such as disarmament and weapons control, public security and the elimination of gender-based violence.

Thank you Mr. President

