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**Statement:**  
**by**  
**The Representative of South Africa**

**on**  
**Women, Peace and Security**

**Security Council**  
**United Nations**  
**New York**  
**27 October 2005**

**Check against delivery**

Mr President,

Once again we are honoured to participate in today's Open Debate on the Fifth Anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. My delegation wishes to associate itself with the previous statements read on behalf of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Group and the Human Security Network.

Mr President,

As we commemorate the fifth year of the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325, we realise now more than ever, the important role of women in the work for peace and security. Time and again, women have played a constructive and essential part in peace processes. They are gradually finding a place at the negotiating table, in the implementation of peace agreements, in post conflict rehabilitation, reconstruction and disarmament. It is high time they were included in those processes in a more formalised way, at all levels and at all stages.

The continued under-representation of women in formal peace processes and other persistent obstacles and challenges resulting from situations such as gender-based violence, poverty, lack of rule of law and various forms of discrimination, prevent women's full, and effective participation in conflict resolution. Conflict destroys the infrastructure and disrupts essential services. More must be done in order to achieve greater participation and effective contribution of women in developing and implementing post-conflict strategies and programs. In addition to Resolution 1325 we already have instruments which recognise the role of women. We can use these to leverage the demand for the inclusion of women in peace negotiations. What is needed is the will.

Mr President,

Resolution 1325 calls for the full inclusion of women in international peace and security processes and action in four areas related to women and peacekeeping, namely:-

- Full and effective participation of women in conflict resolution
- Integration of gender perspectives in peacekeeping missions
- Protection of women and girls in conflict zones
- Mainstreaming of gender sensitisation in UN reporting and implementation systems.

We note that progress has been made on a number of areas; however there is room for improvement especially in the area of mainstreaming gender consciousness in UN reporting and implementation systems. Mr President, these goals of resolution 1325 can only become a reality, through better information, coordination and cooperation as well

as strengthened commitment and accountability at all levels of the United Nations system. Enhanced cooperation with regional organisations and Member States, as well as civil society and women's national machineries is also essential for the success of its implementation.

My delegation therefore notes with appreciation, the UN System-Wide Action Plan for the implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 contained in the Report of the Secretary-General on women, peace and security S/2005/636. This working document identifies numerous actions that different role-players within the UN system can play in furthering its implementation and which can be used to monitor progress. We encourage immediate implementation of the SG's proposals so as to put this action plan into practice. Member States can also enhance the UN system-wide action plan by continuing to implement resolution 1325, including through the development of national action plans or other national level strategies.

Mr President,

The decision by the 2005 High Level Summit to establish the Peacebuilding Commission is an important milestone in furthering the contribution to the full implementation of Resolution 1325. It opens the door for women to ensure integration of the gender perspective in all phases of peace building. Our own experience in South Africa taught us that, given a chance, women can bring an important and much needed perspective. They are not simply victims of wars and conflicts, but are an important part of the solution. We would urge the Commission, once established, to pay particular attention to the knowledge and understanding women can bring in peace building processes.

Mr President,

It is disheartening that sexual and gender based violence, including trafficking in persons, continue to be used as a weapon of war in conflicts. In some parts of the world, gender-based violence has reached almost epidemic proportions. Every effort must be made to halt this odious practise, and bring the perpetrators to justice.

My delegation also wishes to reiterate its condemnation, in the strongest terms, of all acts of sexual misconduct by all categories of personnel in UN Peacekeeping Missions. In this regard, South Africa welcomes the comprehensive report on sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel (A/59/710). South Africa expresses its support to the efforts of the United Nations to fully implement codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and enhance monitoring and enforcement mechanisms. We note with appreciation, the strategies and actions included in the System-wide Action Plan to fully implement those codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures.

Mr President,

As we look back at the five years of implementing resolution 1325, we realise that peace starts with women and for peace to be sustainable, we should ensure that women live more secure and productive lives and are able to fully enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms. We should recognise their invaluable roles and contributions as mediators, educators, peacemakers, peace builders and advocates for peace. Peace attained through participation of all is not just a silence of guns after war, but a sustainable effort at ensuring lasting peace and posterity.

In conclusion, Mr President, my delegation supports the Secretary-General's report before the Security Council as well as all the initiatives undertaken by the UN in implementing resolution 1325.

Thank you.