

**Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
October 2014, Security Council Chamber**

Statement by Mr. Cardi, Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations

I thank you, Madam President, for organizing this open debate of the Security Council on women and peace and security. The perspective you have given to the issue, with a focus on displaced women and girls, is particularly timely and interesting to us.

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

All over the world, women are disproportionately affected by armed conflict and conflict-related situations. Violence, harassment, sexual abuse, lack of access to education and the most basic health-care facilities, as well as water and food shortages, are only some of the many threats and challenges they face every single day. In terms of displacement, up to 80 per cent of the more than 50 million refugees and displaced persons are found to be women and children.

Italy has been a strong advocate of the women and peace and security initiative since its inception. In 2010, we were the first country to call for the women and peace and security agenda to be integrated into the framework of the universal periodic review mechanism. Our national action plan has already been revised once this year to accelerate its implementation in the next three years. The latest version not only reports on progress, but also illustrates the efforts that have been made to adopt a more effective approach. Our new national action plan hinges on two main concepts: first, enhancing coordination and integration among the various administrations dealing with women and peace and security; and secondly, mainstreaming gender-related issues into all socioeconomic initiatives.

While national plans are pivotal instruments, some 15 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) they are no longer enough. We need an international plan that connects all the national plans. In a globalized world, where international issues become domestic problems, or domestic problems become international, the question of displaced people, refugees and induced migration is a huge challenge for the countries under the most pressure. Italy is one of those.

With its tradition of tolerance, understanding and inclusiveness, Italy will always stand by people who, against their will, find themselves in desperate situations caused by dreadful conflicts or human rights violations in their homeland. While entire populations have no other choice but to flee, too often without a destination, their migration can also create tensions in the new land, where people might be struggling to make a living. In that situation, it is no wonder that women and girls become the most vulnerable targets.

Since conflicts and tensions migrate from one country to another, together with population movements, the response must be global. No country in the world can react effectively on its own and no country in the world should be left alone to respond to and address such problems. In that context, a new target of the women and peace and security agenda is needed to address, at the global level, the question of refugees and displaced women and girls, as well as their forced migration. Our

aim must be to see women not only as victims but also as protagonists, with the opportunity and tools to play an important role as promoters of peace, security, understanding and integration.