

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

Statement by Mr. Elbahi, Permanent Mission of Sudan to the United Nations

At the outset, my delegation would like to express its gratitude to you, Madam President, for convening this debate on women and peace and security as we mark the fourteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We also welcome the presence of the Executive Director of UN-Women and the various other briefers at this meeting.

My country's Government attaches particular importance to the issue of women, as evidenced by various steps it has taken that have led to the adoption of several strategies and plans, including a strategy on promoting women's participation covering the period 2013 to 2027. Furthermore, my Government has established a unit to combat violence against women and an independent commission for human rights. We have also appointed two women to head those two bodies pursuant to the principle of parity. My Government also attaches special importance to combating violence against women, in particular in refugee camps in the states of Darfur, the Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan, in cooperation with the United Nations peacekeeping mission and the country team in the Sudan.

The report submitted for this meeting notes the participation of women in elections and decision-making around the world, and that it is not satisfied with the low level of that participation of women. On that point, it is a pleasure and honour for me to declare that the right to vote and to run for elections are rights that have been guaranteed to Sudanese women since the 1950s. The current rate of participation of women in Parliament is 28 per cent. Women fill the positions of Vice Speaker and Chairs of a number of the most important parliamentary commissions. As for participation in politics, which is also mentioned in the report, women in the Sudan have been able to run for the office of President of the Republic and have filled key positions, such as the Adviser to the President and ministers, as well as at the local level. They have played key roles not only in ministries in charge of women's issues but also in other ministries.

The Sudan has enacted national legislation to combat the threat of human trafficking, in particular the trafficking of women and children, given that the Sudan is a transit country owing to its immense stretch of desert. Khartoum hosted a regional conference only two weeks ago, on 13 October, on the topic of combating human trafficking in the Horn of Africa. That conference included the participation of high-level representatives from various international organizations and countries of the region and from around the world. My country has signed agreements to guarantee the security of borders with its neighbours.

With regard to economic measures, my country is implementing a development project for women in rural areas and in displaced persons camps. We are also implementing projects for the economic rehabilitation for women and to ensure microfinancing for women and funds for the informal sector. Women's inheritance rights are guaranteed. With regard to basic services and schooling, there are more young girls and boys at school and in higher education. The infant and maternal mortality rates have dropped significantly.

Furthermore, my country provides significant assistance to displaced persons in the states that I mentioned: Darfur, Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan. I will not go into details owing to the lack of time. Such efforts have produced very positive results that are in line with various humanitarian indicators. However, rebels moving through the area hinder those efforts. The Government has also undertaken efforts to ensure the voluntary return of refugees to the neighbouring country of Chad, assisting people in returning to their villages through development projects once stability and security are restored.

Given that this meeting is aimed at underscoring challenges to implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and in pursuant to your letter, Madam President, my delegation would like to express its support for the objectives set out in the concept note (see S/2014/731, annex). We call for a global approach in dealing with those issues as an urgent step in order to resolve conflicts, assist displaced persons to return to their homes and help countries to overcome conflicts and deal with such problems. We also call for the removal of all obstacles that hinder national efforts, such as the excessive debt burden and the unilateral sanctions imposed on certain conflict affected countries.

Finally, I would like to inform this body that my country is currently engaged in a significant national dialogue process launched by the President of the Republic, who has invited all sectors of Sudanese society to discuss matters of great priority to the country in order to achieve political stability in the entire country. We hope that all the people, in particular women and children, will benefit.