

Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Council, April 2014, Security Council Chamber
Statement by Mr. Hassan, Permanent Mission of Sudan to the United Nations.

First, I should like to convey my congratulations to you, Mr. President, on having organized this open debate on this important matter, namely, conflict-related sexual violence. I should also like to congratulate you on your presidency this month. Many important matters have been drawn to the attention of the international community of late, in particular regarding our continent, Africa.

I should like to reiterate the fact that among States that are particularly involved in protecting women in conflict and on the question of sexual violence in conflict much progress has been made in our country since 2005. The Sudan has implemented resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, and has established several specialized centres at the community level to step up the role of women and to hold women's consultations on equality.

I should like to mention that special programmes on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration have been particularly important in highlighting women's roles. Those have been carried out in coordination with the relevant bodies of the United Nations, including UN-Women. Furthermore, we are combating sexual violence, and have done so since 2005. To that end, we have set up a special unit affiliated with the Ministry of Justice to combat sexual violence against women and girls.

In the legal and judicial spheres, the Office of the Prosecutor-General for crimes in Darfur, which was set up pursuant to the peace agreement, has established an investigation of reports from victims and complaints have been made. That is above and beyond the efforts made by the advisory council on human rights, the Ministry for Social Planning and the Ministry to combat violence against women. Those are bodies linked to our other main body.

This month, we have begun to implement our 10-year action plan to help promote human rights, in particular women's rights. That has been commended by the independent expert, and we would have liked to see that reflected in the report (S/2014/181), especially our efforts in the area of sexual violence against women.

Despite the progress made, paragraph 50 of the report under consideration refers to the situation in Darfur and mentions an increase in reports of conflict-related sexual violence. In these types of discussions, we are used to the date of issuance and publication of the report being mentioned. We want to know about such reports. When we talk about different reports, we want to know which reports we are talking about. That is why we are asking for a clear procedure to ensure the veracity of information and its sources. In several passages, the report talks about constraints imposed by the Government on the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID). That is a reference to some activities of the security apparatus of UNAMID's military component.

Apparently, UNAMID is being asked not to go to certain areas. However, when it talks about UNAMID's civilian component, which has a unit for protecting women against sexual violence in armed conflict, it does have permission. Therefore, we did provide access. In that regard, I think we are talking about erroneous information in the report.

The report also states that armed men in military uniforms attacked women and were responsible for sexual violence. That is not true. I think that we should ensure the veracity of the information and check sources before it is put into the report. We did not prevent the investigator from gaining access. We have a clear procedure in place when it comes to impunity and violence against women, which I have already talked about.

We underscore the need to protect women against violence, and against sexual violence in particular. My Government would like to reiterate its readiness to continue cooperating with the Special Representative of

the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. We have sought to coordinate her visit but we have not been able to do so. Despite that, the Special Representative is very welcome. She can come see what is taking place and check that the information is true.

This is a very sensitive matter. Once again, I would like to underscore that the principle of protecting women during armed conflict is a noble principle and it should not be politicized.