

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
October 28 2011, Security Council Chamber

Statement by H.E. Mr. Jerandi, Representative of Tunisia

First of all, I would like to thank the presidency of the Security Council for having organized this important meeting. My delegation welcomes in particular the opportunity to participate in this debate after last year having celebrated the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) entitled “Women and peace and security”, a historic resolution of which Tunisia, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2000, was one of the authors. I was personally involved in negotiating that resolution.

My country continues to attach particular importance to the issue and would like to underscore its commitment to promoting the rights of women, particularly women in conflict situations, as well as to promoting the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in all its aspects.

Tunisia’s interest in the issue follows from its long-standing commitment to the promotion of gender equality and women’s empowerment. That is a strategic choice that was taken at the time of independence in 1956 and which has become an integral part of my country’s national development policy. The advanced status that Tunisian women enjoy today is one of the most striking results of that choice. My country is convinced that peace, development and democracy cannot be carried out without the full participation of women in public life and in the decision-making process.

The 14 January 2011 revolution in Tunisia, in which Tunisian women of all ages and all categories actively participated, illustrates the commitment of Tunisian women to establishing a democracy where public freedoms, justice and equality are the custodians of social peace and development. On 23 October, the day of the historic elections to our National Assembly, Tunisian women were at the forefront of voters, thus affirming their right to active citizenship.

This debate on the issue of women and peace and security is a good opportunity to evaluate the progress made by the United Nations and Member States in this area and to assess what remains to be done.

It is clear that resolution 1325 (2000) has defined a framework of standards guiding United Nations efforts on policies for integrating gender issues into the whole of the work of the Organization. It is also important to recognize that there is now great awareness of the many types of violence inflicted on women in conflict, and that significant attempts have been made to address them. Since the primary victims of armed conflict are women, along with children and the elderly, it is important that they take on a key role in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and, even more urgently, in the process of prevention, to which it is never too late to devote special attention.

That is why women’s perspectives are increasingly taken into account in planning and implementing peace processes and in peacekeeping operations. The appointments of the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the

Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict are important signs that should be built on, particularly since it must be acknowledged that despite progress, shameful crimes against women continue to occur during armed conflict, especially in Africa and occupied Palestine, where women are still coping with terrible situations every day.

National ownership of resolution 1325 (2000) is the best way to ensure its effective implementation, given that primary responsibility for combating rape as a weapon of war falls to Member States, whose duty it is to urgently take measures to deal with this phenomenon, measures that educate as well as enforce. Tunisia has already launched a national action plan for implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In particular, it promotes training women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding so that we can deploy qualified personnel in United Nations operations on the ground.

The plan is also designed to improve pre-deployment training, with particular emphasis on special measures aimed at protecting women against all forms of violence against them. In September 2010 Tunisia organized a regional seminar on this subject, enabling participants from the western Mediterranean countries in the framework of the 5+5 process to exchange national experiences with regard to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Tunisia intends to continue implementing that resolution as a part of its comprehensive approach to gender equality and the empowerment of women, and will make itself available to the United Nations concerning any aspect of implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and other international instruments dealing with the welfare of women and their participation in decision-making processes, as well as promoting a culture of respect for women.