

Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Council, April 17th 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Ceylan, Permanent Mission of Turkey to the United Nations.

At the outset, Mr. President, allow us to congratulate the Rwandan presidency for organizing today's important debate.

Turkey has aligned itself with the statement delivered earlier today by the observer of the European Union. I shall therefore be very brief.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/149) and the statements made today make clear that, over the past three and a half years, effective action has been taken by the United Nations to prevent and address the scourge of sexual violence in conflict. We also note with satisfaction the activities and initiatives undertaken by UN-Women, including through the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, to which Turkey is a contributor.

Despite those efforts, sexual violence in conflict remains prevalent. Both the report of the Secretary-General and the findings of the international commission of inquiry indicate the occurrence of serious cases of sexual violence in the course of the conflict taking place just across our border with Syria. In that regard, we welcome the intention of Special Representative Bangura to visit Syria to investigate the reports of abuses.

As of today, Turkey hosts more than 190,000 Syrians in 17 camps. There are another 100,000 who have made their way to various Turkish cities and towns. The massive flight of Syrians out of their country is certainly because the Syrian regime does not care about their safety and well-being. Therefore, the groundless remarks made earlier today regarding the camps in Turkey should be read through that prism. The camps in Turkey have been visited by many international representatives and United Nations dignitaries, including Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. I do not wish to repeat here yet again their comments and praise. By attributing groundless allegations to others, the perpetrators of the massive humanitarian crisis in Syria are trying to divert attention from their brutal and inhumane policies. That futile approach will certainly not prevail.