

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security – 5 October 2009
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Uganda

Mr. Rugunda (Uganda): Let me congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency for the month of October and assure you of my delegation's full cooperation. I thank you for convening this important debate, over which you are personally presiding.

I would also like to thank Ambassador Susan Rice and the United States delegation for their excellent leadership during a very eventful and fruitful month of September. I would like to thank Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro for her statement, as well as to welcome the statements made by the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Gender Issues, Ms. Rachel Mayanja; the Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), Ms. Inés Alberdi, and Ms. Asha Hagi Elmi Amin, representing the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

Uganda is committed to strengthening women's participation in the promotion of peace and security within the context of conflict prevention and resolution, eradicating sexual violence and ending impunity in conflict-prone situations. As Uganda is a country that has experienced an extended period of instability, the Government has set one of its priority goals as tracking progress on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Women's participation in Uganda's political life goes beyond elective office and has been extended to other spheres, including peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts, as stipulated by resolution 1325 (2000).

Uganda has an advanced, articulate and organized women's peace movement. Even before the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the Uganda Government had previously supported the efforts of women leaders, such as Ms. Betty Bigombe, who initially led the peace talks with the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) to end the conflict in northern Uganda. The Uganda Government also made provision for women's participation in the 2006-2008 peace talks with the Lord's Resistance Army in Juba, in the southern Sudan. In addition to the two women directly on the peace team, Uganda facilitated women's attendance at various meetings that were held during that process.

In addition, during the talks a gender adviser was seconded to the Office of the Special Envoy to LRA Affected Areas. This was the result of collaboration between UNIFEM and the United Nations Department of Political Affairs. Uganda also ensured that close reference was made to resolution 1325 (2000) in the Implementation Protocols on reconciliation and accountability; comprehensive solutions; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; and the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement that were signed by both parties, as well as the Uganda Government's eventual peace recovery development plan for northern Uganda, which was launched in July 2009 to ensure that women equally enjoy the opportunities and benefits of the planned interventions.

Uganda is the first and only country in the world to adopt a three-in-one national action plan on resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and the Goma Declaration. Uganda is also one of five countries to develop a national action plan with concrete indicators to monitor implementation, as well as planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, so as to take into consideration the needs of female and male ex-combatants, as well as their dependants. Uganda's action plan focuses on the relevant legal and policy framework, improved access to health facilities and medical treatment for victims of sexual and gender-based violence, women in leadership and decision-making, the elimination of gender-based violence in society and, finally, budget

allocations for the implementation of resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and the Goma Declaration. As we do this, our experience has taught us that the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and, indeed, of all other resolutions complementary to it, must begin at the earliest stages of post-conflict peacebuilding; otherwise, it will not yield optimum results.

It is for this reason that Uganda remains concerned that the contribution of women to peacebuilding is far from satisfactory, which can be attributed to their being excluded from the decisionmaking process on the one hand and, on the other, to inadequate financing of their requirements. This, in the long run, compromises efforts to attain sustainable peace and security.

Uganda is aware that the adoption of a resolution does not automatically translate into its implementation. This year marks the ninth since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. In those nine years, several bottlenecks have been identified, particularly in post-conflict situations, ranging from the availability of funding and political will to a lack of coordination, appropriate capacities for implementation, as well as institutional monitoring and evaluation.

Experience has also taught us that a simple increase in the number of women in talks is not sufficient and that in-depth consultations are still required to ensure that nothing is left out with regard to the legitimate concerns of women.

In this regard, Uganda, in partnership with the United Nations Population Fund, UNIFEM and the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues, held its first workshop from 14 to 16 September this year to agree on what these indicators will be for Uganda's action plan. The workshop, which brought together 35 participants from Government ministries, civil society organizations and the international community, identified 16 indicators out of the total 547 that were originally earmarked for the implementation of Uganda's action plan.

In conclusion, Uganda welcomes the adoption of resolution 1889 (2009), as it highlights this deficit and calls for a response to the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security. We also encourage affected Member States to establish indicators to ensure that their national action plans for women's participation in post-conflict reconstruction and peacebuilding are implemented not only in a practical, effective and coherent fashion, but also in a way that allows for accountability. We look forward to the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2010 as a significant milestone for Uganda's women and, indeed, for all women everywhere.