

Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Conflict, June 24th 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Nduhura, Permanent Mission of Uganda to the United Nations.

I thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this open debate on women and peace and security with a focus on sexual violence in conflict. I would like to convey our appreciation to United Kingdom Foreign Secretary William Hague, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Zainab Bangura, and Ms. Jane Adong Anywar of Uganda, who spoke on behalf of the Women's Initiatives for Gender Justice, for their insightful statements.

We welcome the continuous efforts by the international community to highlight the urgent need for effective measures and action to prevent, combat and eradicate the scourge of sexual violence in conflict. While significant progress has been made through concerted efforts at all levels, including by the United Nations Action against Sexual Violence and by UN- Women, there is no doubt that a lot more remains to be done, especially in preventing and responding to sexual violence in conflict. My delegation therefore calls for an intensification of efforts to ensure compliance with the obligations to prosecute perpetrators, end impunity and provide equal protection and access to justice for all victims of sexual violence, particularly women and girls.

The Government of Uganda has taken a comprehensive approach aimed at enhancing women's empowerment, enhancing their participation and involvement in the promotion of peace and security, in conflict-prevention and resolution, in eradicating sexual violence and in ending impunity. We are committed to the implementation of the relevant instruments.

In 2008, Uganda developed a national action plan based on resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and the Goma Declaration on Eradicating Sexual Violence and Ending Impunity in the Great Lakes Region (2008), which complements other national, regional and international policy and legal frameworks to which Uganda is a party. The national action plan gave renewed impetus and resolve in Uganda's efforts towards the recognition and advancement of women's rights and the campaign to eradicate sexual violence. The plan was revised in 2011 to take into account the lessons learned during its implementation, including the need to make indicators more streamlined and succinct for better monitoring and reporting. The revised plan will serve as a guide to all implementing actors until 2015, although it will be reviewed periodically to set new priorities based on experiences on the ground during implementation.

We would like to stress the need for all parties to armed conflict to enforce the prohibition against sexual violence through their chains of command and to ensure that alleged abuses are investigated promptly and that perpetrators held accountable.

Uganda strongly supports more active participation and involvement by women in addressing the concerns raised by sexual violence in conflict, post-conflict situations and peacebuilding, in particular in processes such as security sector and justice sector reform. We are convinced that sexual violence can be more effectively combated through the strengthening of national judicial systems, including by revising discriminatory laws, simplifying procedures for lodging complaints and providing free legal services to victims. We also recognize the importance of providing timely assistance, including health services, and supporting the livelihoods of victims and survivors of sexual violence.

United Nations peacekeepers and those of regional organizations authorized by the United Nations have a key role to play in preventing sexual violence in conflict situations by practicing zero tolerance within their ranks and protecting vulnerable populations. There is no doubt that increasing the number of women recruited and deployed in peacekeeping operations would make a significant

contribution to addressing the problem of sexual violence in conflict.

In conclusion, we must redouble our efforts and sustain the momentum in the fight against sexual violence at the national, regional and international levels, using a multi-pronged approach and utilizing all of the tools at our disposal. We therefore welcome the adoption of resolution 2106 (2013) by the Security Council today as one of the ways of advancing further action towards eradicating sexual violence in conflict situations.