

Women, Peace and Security Debate

Tomorrow (28 October) the Council will hold its annual debate on women, peace and security. Nigeria, Council president for November, chose “Women’s Participation and Role in Conflict Prevention and Mediation” as the theme of the debate. It circulated a concept note on 19 October outlining issues for the Council to consider ahead of the debate. Besides member states, the Secretary-General and Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women, will also speak at the open debate. In addition it appears that the Council will hear from a representative of an Afghan women’s NGO, Orzala Ashraf Nemat, who will speak on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security and Ambassador Lazarus Kapambwe (Zambia) who will make a statement in his capacity as ECOSOC president.

It seems that a presidential statement focused on the theme of women’s participation and linking the Council’s initiatives on women, peace and security with its initiatives on conflict resolution, peacebuilding and preventive diplomacy will be adopted following the debate.

The statement is likely to acknowledge the contribution that women could make in conflict prevention and mediation at local, national and regional levels and to encourage the UN, member states, and international and regional organisations to strengthen the capacity of women involved in conflict resolution. It is also likely to address the need for the UN to continue to pursue the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda, on both participation as well as protection issues.

The Secretary-General’s most recent report on women, peace and security (S/2011/598), which was published on 29 September, provides the Council with an overview of the implementation of resolution 1325, including information collected on one third of the indicators presented by the Secretary-General in his 2010 report. (These particular indicators relate to prevention of conflict and of violence against women in conflict, women’s participation, protection and relief and recovery.) The report

also contains the strategic framework requested by the Council last October to guide UN implementation of 1325 over the next ten years.