



*PERMANENT MISSION OF THE KINGDOM  
OF LESOTHO TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
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## **STATEMENT**

**BY**

**H.E. AMBASSADOR LEBOHANG F. MAEMA KC  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE  
OF THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO**

**In The Security Council**

**On Agenda Item :**

**Women and Peace and Security**

**On behalf of the**

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY**

**26 October 2006, New York**

**Please check against delivery**

Mr President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Member States of Southern African Development Community (SADC), namely, Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and my country Lesotho.

We welcome the report of the Secretary-General as contained in document S/2006/770. We consider it a comprehensive assessment of the implementation of the UN System-wide Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. We therefore commend the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women for the pivotal role played in its preparation. Also commendable is the positive response of other UN entities that contributed towards the successful implementation of the System-wide Action Plan.

Mr President,

The adoption by the Security Council, of resolution 1325(2000), was a big step towards the protection of women in conflict situations as well as the recognition of the substantial difference that women make when actively involved in conflict resolutions and peace processes. We therefore highly commend the commitment shown by the Secretary-General by commissioning a study to review the implementation of the System-wide Action Plan. We are confident that the findings of the study will be instrumental in accelerating implementation of resolution 1325(2000).

We are encouraged by the fact that the study showed that considerable progress has been made in implementing resolution 1325(2000) by all stakeholders. This indeed demonstrates the importance we all attach to this resolution, which if implemented effectively can save millions of lives. The resolution recognises the impact of armed conflicts on women and stresses the importance of women's equal participation in resolving conflicts and therefore promoting peace and security. We are therefore convinced that with more women taking an active role in peace building processes, a lot can be achieved.

Mr President,

The pivotal role that women play when trained in the area of early warning in order to prevent conflict is well understood by our Governments. Indeed, it has been noted that women are among the first to send alarm about looming conflicts in their areas. Unfortunately, their voices continue to be ignored .

In this regard, we concur with the observation in the Secretary General's report that concrete measures are necessary to strengthen capacity-building in the field to ensure women's full participation at all stages of the peace process especially in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements.

We therefore appreciate measures taken by the Department of Peace- Keeping Operations(DPKO) to hold regular meetings with women representatives in countries affected by conflict. However, it is a hard fact that in most countries there are very few female representatives as women are generally not involved in politics and do not hold decision-making positions. It is in this regard that SADC stresses the importance of giving priority to the empowerment of women, thus enabling their participation in politics and decision making.

Mr President,

SADC condemns acts of sexual violence perpetrated on women and girls, particularly by members of the United Nations Peacekeeping Missions and other international organisations tasked with protecting women in situations of armed conflict. It is a disheartening phenomenon when those charged with the mandate of protecting civilians during armed conflict , prey on the most vulnerable members of the affected communities. We therefore welcome the strategy of the Secretary-General to address acts of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse in UN peacekeeping missions. Also particularly welcome is its reflection in the appointment terms of UN police, military observers etc. Needless to say, significant progress noted in this area must be accompanied by further concrete actions.

Mr President,

Accelerated implementation of the recommendations is essential to the realization of the goals of resolution 1325(2000). We need to address the gaps and challenges uncovered in the report of the Secretary-General to enable the United Nations system to effectively implement the System-wide Action Plan. Member States too have the critical role of supporting the United Nations system and monitoring progress to make sure implementation is successful. We in SADC pledge to do our part.

In conclusion, Mr President, we support the Secretary-General's recommendation to the Security Council that the system-wide Action Plan be renewed beyond the year 2007.

I thank you Mr President.