



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY MDM. SITI HAJJAR ADNIN
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
PERMANENT MISSION OF MALAYSIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**AT THE SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE ON
WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY
NEW YORK, 15 APRIL 2015**

Madam President,

At the outset, I wish to thank you for convening this open debate on women and peace and security focusing on the pressing issue of sexual violence in conflict. My delegation expresses appreciation to Madam Zainab Hawa Bangura, Special Representative of the Secretary General on Sexual Violence in Conflict for her briefing and to Ms. Hamsatu Allamin, representative from the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for her poignant presentation. Malaysia associates itself with the statement to be made by Viet Nam on behalf of ASEAN.

Madam President,

2. It is a sad truth that situations of conflict have throughout history formed the backdrop for heinous violations of sexual violence against civilians, disproportionately affecting women and girls as well as men and boys. In this regard, over the past two decades the international normative framework to end and prevent sexual violence in conflict has been fortified, including through seven Security Council resolutions including 1325

3. And yet the seventh annual report of the Secretary General on sexual violence in conflict provides a shocking reminder that sexual violence continues to be widely committed as a tactic of war, causing devastating consequences for women and girls and shattering local communities caught in the crossfire. The report documents cases of women and girls being sexually assaulted while farming or collecting firewood; abducted from homes and schools *en masse* to be sold into sexual slavery or forced marriages; or compelled to flee neighbourhoods to escape persecution only to find themselves at risk of sexual violence in displacement camps.

4. The physical and personal insecurity faced by women and children in situations of armed conflict permeates daily lives and routines, resulting in intolerable environments and prolonged instability. Clearly we need to redouble our efforts to

ensure the effective implementation of all Security Council resolutions in preventing sexual violence and returning peace, security and stability to conflict-stricken areas.

Madam President,

5. The report highlights recurring challenges and new trends in conflict-related sexual violence, namely the rise of violent extremist groups. Malaysia is deeply alarmed that violent extremist groups are using sexual violence as a means to terrorize, persecute and conquer. We condemn in strongest terms the barbaric acts of sexual violence committed by Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, Da'esh and their ilk, particularly against women and girls, which have caused unspeakable anguish to families and local communities.

6. In parallel with disturbing reports of sexual violence being committed against women, we are also witnessing cases of women and youth, including young girls, being lured to join such groups. Given the complexity of the spheres of influence surrounding violent extremist groups and their link to terrorism, the international community must ensure that its response is multidimensional including taking into account that women are victims as well as agents of violent extremism. In this regard, we agree that measures to prevent and address sexual violence should be strategically aligned with efforts to prevent violent extremism.

Madam President.

7. In underlining the primary responsibility of Governments to ensure the protection of civilians and upholding human rights, we firmly support the efforts of national Governments to strengthen measures to eliminate sexual violence in conflict, including through the adoption of action plans in concert with the UN. We also commend the initiatives of Governments to protect the rights of victims of sexual violence and improve access to justice through the passage of relevant legislation. The importance of accountability and justice mechanisms cannot be overstated and we believe that national capacities must be enhanced and supported in this regard.

8. We note that the majority of parties listed in the annex of the Secretary General's annual report comprise of non-state armed groups and view that peace processes provide a critical forum of engagement with such groups. We call for provisions on sexual violence in conflict to be integrated into all peace processes, negotiations and agreements. In relation to this, we recognize the great value of the UN Guidance for Mediators in addressing conflict-related sexual violence in ceasefire and peace agreements as a tool in training envoys, mediators and mediation experts.

9. At the same time, the involvement of women in peace processes is crucial and we commend the efforts of Member States that have specifically reserved space at the negotiating table for women's meaningful participation, including survivors of sexual violence.

Madam President,

10. Malaysia believes that peacekeeping missions and peace operations must be adequately supported to respond and prevent incidences of sexual violence in conflict, including through standardized pre-deployment and in-mission training. Mindful of this need, Malaysia's Peacekeeping Training Center has and continues to collaborate with DPKO and UN partners to provide training in various aspects of peacekeeping for countries in Asia and beyond. One current project running from March 2014 to December 2015 involves developing training manuals and modules on gender, cultural diversity in peacekeeping operations and the protection of civilians.

11. We note with the appreciation the complementary roles of Women Protection Advisers and Gender Advisers in UN missions in ensuring the effective implementation of Council resolutions on sexual violence in conflict and women, peace and security, and we call for these posts to be sufficiently budgeted for.

Madam President,

12. The stigmatization faced by victims of sexual violence contributes to the persistent underreporting of sexual violence cases and remains a challenge that needs to be overcome. This stigma also affects the children born to victims of sexual violence, who are sometimes abandoned or grow up shunned. We call for national Governments and civil society actors, including religious leaders, to step up efforts to reduce the paralyzing stigma experienced by survivors of sexual violence at the community level.

13. We stress that survivors of sexual violence must receive timely and comprehensive assistance and healthcare services to aid their recovery and reintegration into communities. We urge for consistent funding to be channeled to reintegration programmes that empower women and girls, especially livelihood programmes and education opportunities. We also support the design and implementation of reparation programmes as a tool for empowerment in line with the recommendations of the Secretary General's Guidance Note on Reparations for Conflict-Related Sexual Violence.

Madam President,

14. The wounds inflicted by conflict-related sexual violence can scar survivors and communities for generations. The collective and coordinated response of all stakeholders, including Member States, the UN and civil society is crucial in ensuring long-term strategies that will allow for scarred communities to heal and rebuild. I wish to conclude by taking the opportunity to particularly commend the tenacious work of SRSG Bangura as well as the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict and UN Action in catalyzing responses in this field. Malaysia pledges its continued support for these efforts.