

**Security Council**

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**Letter dated 8 October 2019 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

I have the honour to inform you that, under the presidency of South Africa, the Security Council will hold an open debate on women, peace and security on Tuesday, 29 October 2019, on the theme “Towards the successful implementation of the women, peace and security agenda: moving from commitments to accomplishments in preparation for the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#)”. In order to guide the discussion on the subject, South Africa has prepared a concept note (see annex).

I would be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

*(Signed)* Jerry **Matjila**  
Permanent Representative and Ambassador  
Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations



## **Annex to the letter dated 8 October 2019 from the Permanent Representative of South Africa to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General**

### **Concept note for the Security Council open debate on women and peace and security, to be held on 29 October 2019**

#### **1. Background**

1. The Security Council annual debate on women and peace and security is expected to be held on 29 October 2019, under the presidency of the Republic of South Africa. During the debate, the Council will consider the annual report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).

2. This debate will be an opportune time to reflect on the achievements and challenges in implementing resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#) and subsequent resolutions, as well as the aspirations of the women and peace and security agenda in the lead-up to its twentieth anniversary. This reflection should also take into account the implementation of the recommendations of the 2015 global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).

3. In the 19 years since the adoption of the resolution in 2000 and subsequent related resolutions ([1820 \(2008\)](#), [1888 \(2009\)](#), [1889 \(2009\)](#), [1960 \(2010\)](#), [2106 \(2013\)](#), [2122 \(2013\)](#), [2242 \(2015\)](#) and [2467 \(2019\)](#)), significant progress has been made in the promotion of the women and peace and security agenda. In these resolutions, the Security Council recognizes, among other things, the different impact of armed conflict on women and girls, and also the need for the meaningful involvement of women in conflict resolution and prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. It has been proved that their meaningful participation in all areas of conflict resolution is concretely linked to more effective and sustainable outcomes, better protection, prevention and more sustainable peace. To this end, concrete proposals have been made for the realization of the women and peace and security agenda, including quotas and targets (percentages) on representation and participation.

4. Despite these laudable resolutions, challenges still remain in realizing the meaningful participation of women in peace and security activities, primarily because of discriminatory laws, attitudinal and institutional obstacles, gender stereotyping, political instability and the abuse of human rights in armed conflict situations. Moreover, women remain marginalized or their roles are limited in contributing to and participating in peace processes, including in the drafting of peace agreements, mediation and negotiation.

5. The involvement of women in United Nations peacekeeping roles within the military, police and civilian components in conflict also remains negligible despite the adoption of resolution [2242 \(2015\)](#), in which the Security Council calls for doubling the numbers of women in military and police contingents of United Nations peacekeeping operations over the next five years. It is, however, encouraging that the Secretary-General has elaborated the uniformed gender parity strategy 2018–2028, which is aimed at ensuring that the uniformed component of United Nations peacekeeping is diverse and inclusive of women.

6. Women remain the target of sexual and gender-based violence, including rape as a weapon of war in armed conflict situations. Significant progress has been made in the Security Council to address this scourge, as evidenced by the inclusion of language on the fight against sexual violence in all related resolutions on country-specific or thematic issues. Through the adoption of resolution [2467 \(2019\)](#) on sexual

violence in armed conflict, as well as other Council resolutions on women and peace and security, the Council emphasizes the importance of accountability measures in resolving sexual violence in conflict, as well as the need to adopt a survivor- and victim-centred approach.

7. The Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, in her foreword to the 2015 global study, writes: “there remains a crippling gap between the ambition of our commitments and actual political and financial support. We struggle to bridge the declared intent of international policymaking and the reality of domestic action in the many corners of the world where resolution 1325 is most needed.”

8. In the 2015 global study, gaps and challenges, as well as emerging trends and priorities for action, were identified. In addition, detailed recommendations were set out to guide the further implementation of the women and peace and security agenda.

9. The objective of the open debate should thus be to mobilize global action to implement the entirety of the extensive normative framework that has already been adopted on women and peace and security in the final year before the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). The emphasis should therefore be on the implementation of all the adopted resolutions pertaining to women and peace and security, as well as the recommendations detailed in the 2015 global study.

## 2. Theme

10. It is proposed that the open debate should be focused on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and related resolutions in their entirety, with specific attention given to the preparations for the twentieth anniversary of the resolution in 2020. It is thus proposed that the theme be: “Towards the successful implementation of the women, peace and security agenda: moving from commitments to accomplishments in preparation for the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000)”

## 3. Objective/focus

11. The overarching objective of the open debate is to continue discussions on the full implementation of the women and peace and security agenda, measuring progress and identifying challenges with mitigating strategies.

12. Other specific objectives include:

(a) Soliciting inputs and comments from Member States and other participants on the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2020 and their efforts in this regard;

(b) Offering an opportunity to Member States to pledge new commitments on the women and peace and security agenda to be implemented by the twentieth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000);

(c) Adopting an outcome that will facilitate the work of the Security Council on women and peace and security as it relates to the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) beyond 2020.

## 4. Guiding questions

13. The following questions, among others, are meant to guide the debate:

(a) What is the assessment of the current implementation of the women and peace and security agenda in terms of the four pillars of resolution 1325 (2000), namely prevention, protection, participation, and relief and recovery?

(b) To what degree have the recommendations of the 2015 global study on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) been implemented by Member States, regional organizations and other relevant stakeholders?

(c) What new measures should the Security Council adopt to further advance the women and peace and security agenda?

(d) Are the existing national and regional strategies on implementing the women and peace and security agenda working? What are the gaps in implementing these strategies?

(e) How do we ensure that peace processes are designed to include all relevant sectors of society, including women?

(f) What are the activities that should be undertaken by relevant stakeholders towards the commemoration of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2020?

(g) What should the overarching objective of the commemoration in 2020 be?

## **5. Expected outcome**

14. The Security Council is expected to adopt an outcome document providing a political commitment reaffirming implementation of the existing resolutions on women and peace and security.

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