

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
November 30th 2012, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Ntwaagae Permanent Mission of Botswana to the United Nations.

Let me begin by thanking and congratulating the Indian presidency of the Council for the initiative to hold this open debate today on women, peace and security, with a focus on the role of women civil society organizations in contributing to the prevention and resolution of armed conflict and peacebuilding.

We believe that today's open debate will offer an opportunity to reflect on the lessons learned and the actions needed to accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions, as well as related international commitments on women and peace and security.

Botswana welcomes the Security Council's continued focus on issues related to women, peace and security, particularly its call for the enhanced participation, representation and involvement of women in the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts and in peacebuilding, as well as a stronger commitment to address challenges to the engagement of women at all levels.

We sincerely thank the Secretary-General for his informative report (S/2012/732) and for the detailed analysis it contains on the progress made in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

By taking part in today's deliberations, Botswana reaffirms the great importance and its recognition of the contribution and role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and renews its commitment to address issues related to women and gender equality at the national level.

Botswana's support for United States-led resolution 66/130, aimed at encouraging the greater political participation of women and their expanded role in decision-making and peacekeeping, and which was adopted by the General Assembly's Third Committee in 2011, is a practical demonstration of our strong commitment in that regard.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) in 2000, significant progress has been made in its implementation, as demonstrated by the notable efforts made by the United Nations system, Member States, civil society and other actors. In that regard, a number of activities covering a broad range of areas have been undertaken over the past decade.

As noted in the Secretary-General's report, we are encouraged by the fact that the number of countries that have articulated their priorities on women and peace and security through national action plans has continued to grow.

We are, however, concerned that despite the normative framework and the wide range of activities spurred by the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the underrepresentation of women in formal peace processes, as well as violence against women and girls, continues. This situation certainly has to be corrected.

To that end, Botswana reiterates its strong condemnation of all violations committed against women and girls, including sexual and gender-based violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations. In that connection, we wish to stress the importance of promoting and protecting the human rights of women and girls in the context of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and bringing to justice those responsible for crimes of that nature.

My delegation is convinced that peace is inextricably linked to the issue of equality between women and men, and, as such, we fully share the view that gender equality should be recognized as a core issue in the maintenance of peace and security.

In this regard, we also believe that if women are to play a key role in conflict-prevention and peacebuilding processes, the obstacles and challenges that limit their involvement need to be addressed, including their underrepresentation in formal peace and security processes.

The effective participation of women's civil society organizations in conflict prevention and resolution is essential for the sustainability of peace processes. Learning from the examples of success stories concerning the involvement of women and women's organizations in conflict resolution and peacebuilding, as was the case in Rwanda, Liberia, Sierra Leone

and Timor-Leste, we also recognize the important contribution of women's civil society organizations in the prevention and resolution of conflict. To that end, the need to facilitate the inclusion and participation of women in all efforts aimed at peacebuilding remains critical.

Furthermore, we are also of the belief that in order to achieve the goals of resolution 1325 (2000), the efforts of women's civil society organizations should be encouraged and supported.

I wish to conclude by reiterating the call made in General Assembly resolution 66/130 regarding the need to enhance the role of women in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution, in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000). In the same vein, I wish to also stress the importance of creating enabling conditions for women's participation during all stages of peace processes and of countering negative societal attitudes regarding the full and equal participation of women in conflict resolution and mediation.

I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity you have given me to address the Council.