

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, (Conflict Related Sexual Violence)
23 February 2012, Security Council Chamber

Statement by H.E Mr. Rivard, Permanent Representative of Canada

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I thank the Togolese presidency for convening today's open debate on conflict-related sexual violence.

Canada welcomes the Secretary-General's recent report (S/2012/33) and thanks the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict for her presentation today and her efforts to strengthen United Nations mechanisms to prevent and respond to such crimes, including rape and trafficking of women and girls. Canada encourages the Security Council to receive regular briefings by the Special Representative following her visits to countries on the Council's agenda. (spoke in French)

Canada strongly supports the Security Council's recognition of the need to take effective measures to prevent and respond to conflict-related sexual violence, including rape as a weapon of war. In this regard, Canada calls on the Council to ensure the implementation of increased accountability measures for these crimes, including monitoring and reporting arrangements and holding those responsible for sexual violence to account. It is also important to give consideration to the health, safety and dignity of survivors.

Canada welcomes the inclusion of the list of perpetrators of acts of sexual violence in the annex to the Secretary-General's report. My country calls on the Security Council to increase pressure on States to hold perpetrators of sexual violence to account. Canada also calls on the Security Council to ensure that its sanctions committees adopt criteria pertaining to acts of sexual violence such as rape as a weapon of war, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy, enforced sterilization or other forms of sexual violence of comparable gravity. (spoke in English)

Canada urges the Council to consistently address conflict-related sexual violence in its work, including by ensuring that preventing and responding to sexual violence is part of the mandated tasks of United Nations peacekeeping operations. In the upcoming mandate renewals of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan next month, mandate elements addressing sexual violence should be strengthened.

Canada supports the efforts of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict and the use of the early warning indicators that are being piloted for use in select projects, including operations in South Sudan and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.