

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
28th of October 2011, Security Council Chamber

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Gilles Rivard, Representative of Canada

Mme. President, on behalf of the Government of Canada, I thank the Nigerian Presidency for today's open debate.

Canada welcomes the recent Secretary General's report on Women, Peace and Security and the 2011 General Assembly Resolution on strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution as a positive step to improving cooperation and coordination.

One year ago this month, Canada announced its Action Plan which seeks to enhance the participation of women in peace processes. We encourage the meaningful participation of women in all elements of peacemaking. We also promote efforts to protect the human rights and physical safety of women and girls, including against rape as a weapon of war and all forms of sexual violence in conflict.

There remains much work to be done to implement the Security Council Resolutions on Women, Peace and Security with respect to mediation and conflict prevention.

During his recent visit to Tripoli, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs the Honourable John Baird met with Libyan women's groups to discuss the important role that women's leadership will play in the new Libya and its democratic institutions. The Minister urged the new government of Libya to ensure the participation of women in decision-making during Libya's transition. Libya is an example of an environment in which barriers to women's access to peace processes and to reconstruction efforts will need to be addressed by all those involved.

As we look to the outcomes of this debate, we encourage the Security Council to continue to provide the political leadership and take targeted actions to ensure the meaningful participation of women in conflict prevention, mediation and resolution processes.

In order to inform the work of the Council, we recommend that the Council receive regular briefings on these matters by the Secretary-General and other relevant officials including the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict.

Canada applauds the Secretary-General's recommendation to develop a framework including early warning signs specific to conflict-related sexual violence.

Mme. President, at a time when resources are scarce, we support the call to use mediation increasingly as a cost-effective form of conflict prevention and resolution.

Thank you.