

COLOMBIA



COLOMBIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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Debate abierto sobre
Mujer, Paz y Seguridad

Nueva York, 29 de Octubre de 2008

Favor verificar con el discurso pronunciado

Statement by
H.E. Mrs. Claudia Blum
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United
Nations

Security Council

Open debate on
Women, Peace and Security

New York, 29 October 2008

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Mr. President,

Allow me to congratulate you on your work as President of the Security Council during the month of October.

We appreciate the initiative by your delegation to convey an open debate on the occasion of the eighth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325, on the topic of the *"Women, and peace, and security"*. We also thank you for the conceptual note circulated in the previous days, which provides guidance for the discussion.

Colombia, as one of the countries that are friends of the United Nations Security Council's resolution 1325, has worked in the promotion and implementation of the mandates contained in this resolution, particularly in the commitments directed towards the States.

As it has been pointed out in the concept paper, Resolution 1325 has become a guide that leads the national efforts aimed at reaching gender equity in the construction of peace.

In my country's case, the mandates contained in the Resolution have been incorporated in different policies, plans and programs undertaken in favor of peace and security, and to promote gender equity, particularly through the 2006-2010 National Development Plan.

Mr. President,

Following the debate's course, I would like to briefly share three initiatives that have been undertaken in my country within this framework. They contribute to illustrate how, from the national perspective, practices that widen and strengthen the role of women in the construction of peace can be established.

The first consideration refers to the necessity of materializing that participation in a long term programmatic approach, fully incorporated in the national policies. My country's experience in the drawing of the National Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Action Plan is supported on this approach.

The Colombian State, represented by 27 entities that worked a year and a half in this plan's agreement, had as one of its central criterion including the gender perspective in all the thematic cores under consideration.

Resulting from this, the principal problems that women encounter have been identified; strategies and action lines have been set out directed towards girls, teenagers, adults and elderly adults, in different fields like the educational, labor and family related. Moreover, emphasis has been made in the situation that women confront as a consequence of the violence generated by illegal armed groups and the actions that must be taken by the State to guarantee and redress their rights.

In this fashion, measures have been taken in order that, instead of answering to particular junctures, the actions in the area of human rights and international humanitarian law include, since their commence, the gender perspective. It is important to highlight, that the National Human Rights and International Humanitarian Law Action Plan is a State policy, that has been projected for a 15 year term.

The second consideration has to do with the creation of spaces in which the contribution of women can make an impact on governmental decision making.

It is with this objective that in Colombia the initiative of the creation of Women's Community Councils has been carried out. In these, spaces for the dialogue of women at the provincial and municipal levels have been opened. Within this framework, the policy "Women constructing Peace and Development" has been established, whose implementation has advanced in a satisfactory way.

The members of these Councils are female leaders, who represent diverse organizations and communities. Their purpose is to amplify women's citizen participation, This action is aimed not only at channeling the projects and requests that women file in their localities, but at articulating nets of social women's social organizations against violence and in procure of gender equity.

The Councils exercise a watching function and social control of State Policies for women, and act in coordination with the Office of the Presidential Advisory for Women's Equity, which allows the adequate monitoring of actions taken and achievements obtained.

Mr. President,

Lastly, I would like to highlight the national experience achieved through the so called "laboratories of peace". This initiative has promoted reconciliation

practices that deactivate the causes of violence at the regional level. In the development of this initiative, which finds its origin in the Program for the Support of the Peace Process in Colombia agreed with the European union, the role and participation of women has become fundamental.

The wide movement of citizen participation in favor of peace, has become a true social lab, whereby using the tools of the rule of law, the paths that the Colombian society and the local communities have to cover to attack violence and favor sustainable development are being explored.

These approaches have been equally translated in peace and development initiatives, lead by local and regional women's, youth, afro-Colombian and indigenous organizations. Furthermore, they have allowed the detection of lesson learned and innovative methodologies that work as input for the construction of a public policy favorable to development and peace.

The anticipated result at the level of women, youth, indigenous and afro-Colombian population groups is the increase of their capacity to participate and influence the policies, spaces and processes that contribute to the strengthening of democratic institutions, the construction of peace and the promotion of coexistence.

Mr. President,

My delegation would like to highlight the important role of the UN in fomenting the participation of women in the achievement of peace and security. In our experience, the fundamental element for the development of the national initiative has been the acknowledgement of diversity as the base of democracy and the contribution of women in the construction of peace, security and development. We encourage the United Nations to maintain and deepen this approach.

I thank you.