

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

Statement by Mr. Khalek, Permanent Mission of Egypt to the United Nations.

Allow me at the outset to express our appreciation for the convening of this annual open debate to review the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. Our appreciation is also extended to all previous speakers.

Egypt has read with interest the report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/732) on women and peace and security. Egypt would like to express its appreciation for the efforts made in the preparation of the report and for the progress that has been achieved over the past year, in particular with regard to the involvement of women in mediation efforts; in peace accords that include special provisions to improve security for and the situation of women and girls; and in the continuing efforts for the follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of the activities of United Nations missions. My delegation hopes that future reports will reflect an increase in the number of women who are in leadership positions and involved in the decision-making processes of the United Nations, in particular those related to peace and security.

Women are key and active partners in decision-making, conflict resolution, the development of peace strategies and the promotion of the culture of peace. The empowerment of women is therefore an instrumental factor and a cornerstone in the implementation of Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 1325 (2000), which remains pivotal, as it affirms the responsibility of the international community to ensure women's rights in post-conflict situations and in peace processes.

Egypt reiterates its full commitment to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in line with its international obligations as well as its convictions to the central and indispensable role that could be played by women at all stages of conflict, with the aim of providing support and raising public awareness of the need to achieve peace.

In that context, Egypt also stresses the need for further efforts to include women in decision-making processes at all stages of peace negotiations and mediation, and the need to include the implementation of all relevant resolutions of the Security Council.

Egypt believes that providing women with equal opportunities in the context of decision-making processes reflects not only our commitment to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women but also a clear recognition by the international community of the essential role that women play in their societies.

Egypt deeply appreciates the role of the United Nations system in the area of peace and security and the increased political participation of women in a number of Arab States, as stated in the report, through its joint strategy with the Department of Political Affairs aimed at cultivating women's expertise in mediation and enhancing their role at all stages of mediation and negotiation, and their contribution to United Nations field operations.

Egypt welcomes the appointment of Ms. Zainab Bangura, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, and reaffirms its commitment to fully cooperate with her. Egypt hopes that her reports to the Security Council will mark the distinction between violence in conflict situations and violence in non-conflict situations, with full neutrality, professionalism and objectivity.

Wars and armed conflicts have severe effects on all communities, including on men, women and children, but the Israeli occupation of Arab occupied territories has had severely negative impacts, especially on the status of Arab women psychologically, socially, economically, legally and politically. Arab women under foreign occupation bear a heavy burden because of the practices of the Israeli occupation, such as severe violations of human rights, the blockade that had led to a deteriorating economic situation, restrictions on freedom of movement, and displacement and poverty.

Egypt stresses the responsibility of the United Nations system and of all international organizations concerned with women's issues towards women under foreign occupation, and the need to pay greater attention to their suffering and tragedy, in order to ensure them enjoyment of their rights, in compliance with the relevant provisions of international law, international humanitarian law and human rights law.