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**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. ISIKIA R. SAVUA
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF FIJI TO THE UNITED NATIONS
DURING THE SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN DEBATE ON
WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY
27 OCTOBER 2005, UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK**

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Mr. President,

We thank the Secretary-General for the Action Plan for the Implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security across the United Nations systems contained in document S/2005/636 of 10 October 2005. The report is very comprehensive and written with a view to strengthening commitment and accountability at the highest levels, as well as to allow for improved accountability, monitoring and reporting on progress of implementation of the United Nations system.

Over the years, Fiji has always been mindful of the role of women in our society. We do not question their importance nor the critical role they play in the development of our nation. The Secretary-General's action plan is most welcomed, as it has opened new avenues for consideration on issues that may have been bypassed or regarded as too difficult.

Mr. President,

Women in Fiji have served alongside their men in peacekeeping operations. They have moved away from their traditional roles of working in the logistics supporting areas to frontline operations. These women are volunteers and who like to serve in the promotion of international peace and security. Most senior posts in UN Peacekeeping operations are occupied by men we would like to see some women become senior post-holders to reflect their contributions. It is high time that we not only confine our gratitude to peacekeeping but extend to other areas as well.

One such area should be a commitment to develop a national action plan for the coordinated implementation of resolution 1325. Such an action plan should be public, drawn up in consultation with civil society, and contain specific and time-bound activities, targets and monitoring and reporting mechanisms.

For Fiji and some of our neighbors the implementation of the Action Plan will be with the assistance of UNIFEM who over the years has been supportive of the launching of national policies and strategies in pursuit of resolution 1325(2000). We expect little change from UNIFEM and civil society this time around. However, there has to be instituted as mentioned, some form of monitoring mechanism to ensure that national plans are updated and that a review of the action plan implementation is conducted annually starting in October 2006.

Mr. President,

For five years, the Security Council has been seized with the issue on “Women, Peace and Security” and now that we have an Action Plan, we ought to move forward and establish a focal point and an expert level working group to ensure the integration of resolution 1325 in the Council’s work.

The Plan is another milestone on the issue of Women, Peace and Security and the journey continues. There will be others of which we would support a request to the Secretary General to make recommendations to the Security Council by October 2006 on;

- Different means by which the Security Council could be more systematically informed of the use of gender-based violence by parties to armed conflict, paying special attention to the mechanism already developed to monitor and report to the Security Council on violations against children in armed conflict,
- Different means by which the Security Council could do more to hold parties to armed conflict accountable for these violations by considering for example the imposition of targeted sanctions against such parties.

Women, peace and security is an issue that should be of interest to us all irrespective of where we come from indeed all issues concerning women should receive the response appropriate and equitable to the question posed. The Action Plan is in our view appropriate to the issue in question. It is now incumbent upon us to ensure that it is implemented fully in all its aspects.

Thank you Mr. President.