

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
5th October 2009, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by Ambassador Mr. Gerard Araud, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations

France:

Mr. Araud (France) (spoke in French):

May I begin by congratulating Viet Nam on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and wish them every success for the month of October. I would like to thank, of course, the American delegation for having exercised the presidency last month.

We welcome the initiative taken by Viet Nam in organizing this public debate on women and peace and security, which is dedicated to responding to the needs of women in post-conflict situations. Much has been done, particularly by the United Nations, to implement resolution 1325 (2000), but these efforts must be continued.

First and foremost, the Council has endeavoured to systematically introduce the approach recommended by resolution 1325 (2000) into the mandates of peacekeeping operations and to persuade the parties to conflicts to themselves incorporate this approach in the peace process.

Subsequently, the Secretariat and the agencies, funds and programmes have stepped up activities to protect women, including in post-conflict situations. I would in this connection like to warmly congratulate Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Mr. Alain Le Roy, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, and Ms. Inés Alberdi, Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM). I also thank Ms. Asha Hagi Elmi Amin for her testimony to us.

The Secretary-General's report (S/2009/465) reflects the proliferation of initiatives aimed at training peacekeeping operations personnel, assist women who are the victims of violence and combat impunity. These initiatives include the one carried out by France, in partnership with UNICEF, aimed at reintegrating child soldiers into civil society.

But the United Nations is not alone in acting. The European Union has also demonstrated the importance it attaches to the protection of women by adopting guidelines on violence against women. It has also, at France's instigation, adopted a comprehensive policy regarding the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and an updated operational document on the European policy for security and defence in this regard.

The majority of this task, however, remains to be carried out. A long list remains of dramatic situations that the international community must tackle, including abuses committed in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nepal, Burma, the Central African Republic and Burundi. These examples serve as reminders to us.

Less than a week after the important adoption of resolution 1888 (2009), aimed at bolstering the efforts of the international community to combat sexual violence in armed conflict, the new resolution that the Council has just adopted incorporates major advances to improve implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The definition of indicators by the Secretariat over the coming months to allow all interested parties to follow more closely the progress that has been made in implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is a first step that is both practical and useful.

I also welcome the fact that the Council has taken to heart the observation made before it on 30 September by the French Minister of State for Cooperation and la Francophonie, who stated that transparency, cooperation and coordination of efforts between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and a new special representative of the Secretary-General for sexual violence and armed conflict will be essential. In addition, the Council has for the first time adopted forceful language regarding the medical needs of women who have been the victims of rape or other sexual violence, particularly sexual and reproductive health.

France believes that certain organizational steps to be taken by the Secretariat, particularly within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs, will make it possible to better take into account the role of

women in crisis planning and in preparation for emerging from crisis, thus ensuring a better implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The path to follow is therefore clear, and it is up to us to embark on that path. In order to take stock of the progress that has been made and will be made in this regard, France supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General to organize a ministerial meeting at United Nations Headquarters on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) in October 2010.