

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
Tuesday, 26th October 2010, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by H.E. Mr. Gérard Araud, Permanent Representative of France to the United Nations

France aligns itself with the statement that will be made on behalf of the European Union.

Implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) remains imperfect. Sexual violence continues at an intolerable level, and only 7 per cent of peace negotiating teams are women. Hence, a great deal remains to be done. This tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) should mark the start of fresh efforts by the international community.

France is fully playing its role in these efforts, as reflected in its adoption of a national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The national action plan sets out four strategic goals: protecting women from violence and mobilizing efforts to ensure respect for their basic rights; ensuring the participation of women in the management of conflict and post-conflict situations by promoting the direct participation of women in peacekeeping missions and supporting civil society efforts; increasing awareness of women's rights through training programmes; and developing political and diplomatic action to promote the women and peace and security agenda, particularly in the European Union and in the Security Council.

France was instrumental in recasting operational documents of the European Security and Defence Policy to include protection of women in conflict situations and promotion of their role with respect to emerging from crisis. In that regard, France believes that the United Nations should in the future focus on three priorities: combating sexual violence; employing indicators to monitor implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the United Nations system; and increasing the contribution of women to conflict resolution.

With respect to combating sexual violence, France supports the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and calls for accelerated appointment of women's protection advisers in peacekeeping missions. We look forward to specific proposals in the next report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1820 (2008), which is due in December.

In more general terms, France will continue its efforts to integrate into peacekeeping operations the approach recommended in resolution 1325 (2000) and to convince parties to conflict themselves to do the same in their peace processes.

The fight against impunity is integral to our approach. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, following the mass rapes that took place in Walikale last summer, we call upon the Council to remain vigilant in monitoring compliance with the recommendations set out in its presidential statement of 17 September (S/PRST/2010/17) with a view to punishing the perpetrators and to preventing such horrors from happening again.

Also, indicators to monitor the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) are a useful tool for Member States and the United Nations system in monitoring progress and, when necessary, in noting setbacks. They can also provide early warning, making it possible to anticipate crises and prevent them from degenerating into armed conflict. We call on the Secretary-General to operationalize these indicators as quickly as possible. This would help improve the monitoring of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

In that regard, let me once again draw attention to the situation in Guinea, where the announced postponement of the presidential election and the incidents of recent days are cause for concern, including as regards women if we bear in mind what happened during the massacre of 28 September 2009 and the ensuing days.

Finally, with respect to the participation of women in conflict resolution, France welcomes the progress that has been made. This has been outlined by Ms. Bachelet and Mr. Le Roy, and I shall not return to it now.

In closing, I commend the establishment of UN Women and the appointment of Ms. Bachelet as its Executive Director. Beyond the contribution of the Security Council, the entire United Nations system needs to intensify its action to free women from the scourge of war.