

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict-Affected Situations, October 18th, 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Thoms, Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations

I would like to thank Azerbaijan, which holds the presidency of the Security Council this month, for organizing today's open debate. My thanks also go to the Secretary-General, Ms. Pillay and Ms. Balipou for their very insightful briefings. I congratulate Ms. Mlambo-Ngcuka on her appointment, and I thank her for her first briefing to the Council.

Germany aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

Germany welcomes the detailed analysis of the Secretary-General's report (S/2013/525), which identifies many achievements in the women, peace and security agenda in the past years. We also share the concerns addressed in the report, such as an increasing focus of the international community on women as victims of armed conflict, instead of on their role as actors in peace processes and agents of change in all spheres of society.

We therefore welcome the fact that resolution 2122 (2013), adopted earlier today, emphasizes the positive role that women can and will play if they are fully included in all aspects of conflict-prevention and peacebuilding. The potential of women in building a sustainable peace cannot be underestimated, nor can the imminent problems for post-conflict societies if those who bear the burden of reconstruction on the ground are not fully included in decision-making.

We should ask ourselves what more Member States and the United Nations itself could do to ensure an implementation of the full agenda as laid out in resolution 1325 (2000).

Transitional justice and the rule of law are crucial elements for the prevention and solution of conflicts. We therefore very much welcome the theme of today's debate, which emphasizes the importance of gender-sensitive systems. Women need to be part of all truth and justice commissions, and women's concerns need to be addressed in those fact-finding bodies. At the same time, perpetrators of violence, crimes and human rights violations need to be held accountable for their actions. That is the most promising way to promote lasting reconciliation. Germany has supported several projects in Rwanda and Burundi to train female police officers on the prevention and investigation of sexual and gender-based violence. In Cambodia and Uganda, Germany has supported the access of women to the justice system through legal and psychosocial counseling.

Secondly, 43 countries have adopted national action plans on women, peace and security. That is an important first step. However, any progress on the ground depends on the political will to abide by those commitments. The German national action plan, which was adopted last year, covers the four focus areas set out in resolution 1325 (2000) and additionally includes the areas of preparation for peace missions and the prosecution of crimes. The implementation of the action plan is monitored by an inter-ministerial working group in collaboration with representatives from civil society. German diplomatic missions abroad have been instructed to support the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), for example by advocating for the inclusion of women in local crisis prevention, conflict management and post-conflict peacebuilding or by supporting gender-sensitive projects on the ground.

Thirdly, the Security Council, for its part, should start to systematically mainstream women's issues in all relevant spheres of its work. Whenever the Security Council mandates or renews United Nations missions or requests briefings from envoys and special representatives, women, peace and security should be a central part of all considerations. We welcome that the resolution adopted today contains provisions addressing that.

Fourthly, women protection advisers play a central role in monitoring and reporting to the Council, training mission personnel on preventing and responding to sexual violence, and engaging in dialogue with conflict parties. Although we welcome the deployment of women protection advisers to the missions in South Sudan and Mali, the remaining women's protection advisers in the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission

in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur, which were already mandated by the Council, should also be deployed as rapidly as possible and, where necessary, be included in mission budgets.

Germany will continue its support to UN Women and all other relevant actors, including civil society organizations, to ensure that women's roles and their important contribution in conflict resolution and peacebuilding are adequately taken into account.