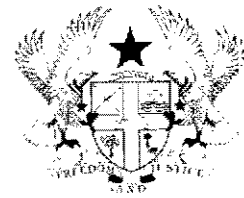


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STATEMENT

BY

HONOURABLE AKWASI OSEI-ADJEI, M.P.
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE
REPUBLIC OF GHANA

AT

AN OPEN DEBATE OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

ON

"WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY"

New York, 22 October, 2007

It is a great pleasure for me to join you at this session which, in my view, has provided fresh and much – welcomed insights into how we can work together, in meeting what is agreeably, one of the foremost challenges facing the world community, this century. The vital role of women, in building and maintaining international peace and security, has already been forcefully brought home to us. Our shared goal remains securing their full and meaningful involvement in that enterprise. Therefore, I commend the Security Council on its leadership, as well as its determination to bring to fruition, the goals set out in resolution 1325 of October 2000.

I further acknowledge the important steps that have been taken by the Secretary – General, to ensure that not only does the United Nations remain a pacesetter in gender – mainstreaming, but that it also extends vital support to member states in the fulfillment of their obligations under resolution 1325.

Ghana welcomes the commitment shown by the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary – General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, UNIFEM, DPKO, as well as the various NGOs and advocacy groups that are actively promoting the objectives enshrined in the resolution.

We also, like other delegations, do attach great importance to the issues of coordination, accountability, monitoring and evaluation both within the UN system and in the context of national Action Plans, in relation to the resolution. Therefore, we consider worthy of emulation, the example shown by those governments that are far advanced in developing national Action Plans, aimed at mainstreaming a gender perspective into the training of military personnel, especially those sent on peacekeeping missions.

Significantly, a gender perspective is also increasingly being integrated into aid packages designed for countries that have recently emerged from conflict. These positive trends, in themselves, demonstrate what could be achieved, if member states were to commit themselves fully to the effective implementation of resolution 1325. As has been repeatedly stated, the resolution provides a workable framework for action by all stakeholders.

Nonetheless, much as we are encouraged by the steady progress that has been made since the adoption of the resolution, we believe, nonetheless, that the challenges and gaps that have been highlighted during this debate deserve serious attention.

The apparent lack of political will, on the part of some governments, coupled with genuine financial and human resource constraints, have all contributed to the inadequate institutional response to resolution 1325 that has been observed by various speakers.

The Secretary – General has put forward several concrete proposals in his latest progress report on resolution 1325 touching on a number of priority areas. Member states, the UN system and civil society actors are all called upon to intensify their efforts towards achieving tangible results, that should be reflected in the increased participation of women in decision – making and peace processes, as well as in the protection of women and girls in conflict situations, among others.

Ghana has made considerable progress in developing the necessary legal and institutional frameworks that can facilitate the implementation of the resolution, including the establishment of a Ministry for Women's and Children's Affairs. Our objective is to give due prominence and practical meaning to the issues that remain at the heart of our concerns. In the coming years, we shall be seeking closer collaboration between Government and Ghanaian civil society groups, and with our respective counterparts abroad. This is in recognition of the benefits of global networking.

On its part, the Security Council could similarly explore the feasibility of a follow – up mechanism that would, in addition to the annual open debates, enable it to monitor closely the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), in a more coordinated and systematic fashion. As the organ with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council has more than a functional interest in ensuring the equal participation and full involvement of women in all aspects of peace and security.

The preponderance of women and girls among the victims of human rights abuses and gender – based violence, during and after conflicts, does pose a direct challenge to the authority of the Security Council, and also imbues its mandate with a profound meaning. Indeed, the Secretary – General summed it all up eloquently, in his 2004 report on *Women, Peace and Security* when he observed that, “ *resolution 1325 (2000) holds out a promise to women across the globe that their rights will be protected and that barriers to their equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace will be removed. We must uphold this promise.* ”

I thank you for your attention.