

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. Rosenthal, Permanent Mission of Guatemala to the United Nations

Before delivering my statement, I would like to say that this morning, my delegation had requested the right to explain its vote. I would like to believe that an unintentional error caused that opportunity to be lost. Our motive was not to explain why we voted in favour of resolution 2122 (2013), but rather to explain why we did not sponsor it, which would have been our normal inclination, given our strong commitment to resolution 1325 (2000). The reason was that despite my delegation's reiterated proposals for a slight nuance in the language of the eighth preambular paragraph, to accommodate it in our national legislation, our proposals were not heeded, and we merely wanted to have that recorded.

I now turn to my statement. I wish to thank you, Sir, for convening this open debate. Anecdotally, it brings back memories of my presidency of the Council exactly one year ago, when a presidential statement was adopted (S/PRST/2012/23) even before the debate was held, for it was postponed until November due to Hurricane Sandy, which caused so much damage to the city that it prevented the scheduled meeting. That is why we welcome the convening of the debate and the adoption of the new resolution, which strengthens the conceptual framework of the Council's groundbreaking resolution 1325 (2000) on the issue, as well as several subsequent resolutions and presidential statements.

We thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2013/525) and for presenting it to the Council. We also thank the new Executive Director of UN Women, Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, for her presentation. I thank Ms. Navanethem Pillay for her valuable contributions to the topic in the Council today, and I especially thank Ms. Brigitte Balipou for providing so eloquently a collective vision of civil society organizations, whose participation we have consistently supported. I also note that we value the concept paper prepared by the presidency (S/2013/587, annex).

Each year the Council has continued to build upon the core premise of resolution 1325 (2000), because we are convinced that without women's security, there can be no lasting peace. We think that the timely theme of today's debate, on women, rule of law and transitional justice in conflict-affected situations, will generate added value.

Although so far the Council has held seven debates on the issue of the rule of law, there is still a way to go to achieve overall accountability for crimes affecting women and girls. Nor have we made sufficient progress in achieving women's full participation in the processes of transitional justice. Similarly, there is room to improve the analysis of sex-differentiated effects on women and girls when the rule of law is violated during and after conflicts.

We have previously said that, based on our own experience, the boundaries between peacebuilding, peacekeeping and economic, social and legal transformations are not clear. Therefore, we think it is

of the utmost importance to advance the fight against impunity, improve access to justice for women and strengthen the justice system infrastructure to deal with such crimes, both nationally and internationally. With regard to our own country, we have adopted legislation on femicide and established courts for the prosecution of that crime, as well as justice centres for onsite legal, judicial and medical services, including psychosocial support for women and their children. We agree with the Secretary-General's recommendation that we must step up efforts to meet and fund the recovery needs of women and girls, especially those who have become heads of households.

Moreover, my country wishes to acknowledge the work of UN Women, whose establishment was a singularly important institutional step forward, among other things to promote the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We support greater participation by women in peacebuilding and strengthening civil capacity after conflicts to be consistent with the issue of women and peace and security. We believe that it is necessary to recognize women as builders of peace and stability.

The resolution that we adopted today contributes to reducing the vulnerability of women and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict situations. We recognize the need to receive timely information in order to intervene early and save lives. In that sense, preventing conflicts is the best way to protect all civilians from the horrors that accompany armed conflicts, in particular women and girls.

Finally, we believe that the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), in 2015, will provide not only the Security Council but the entire United Nations system an opportunity to review the levels of implementation of that resolution and to renew commitments to combat violence, including sexual violence. We urge all Member States and the United Nations system to facilitate greater participation by women in that area.