

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

*Statement by Mrs. Gatto, Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations*

Mr. President, allow me to begin by thanking you for organizing today's open debate of the Security Council and the speakers for their valuable contributions.

Italy welcomes the adoption by the Security Council today's of resolution 2122 (2013), on women and peace and security, which is a further step towards the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Italy aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union and wishes to make the following remarks in its national capacity.

We appreciate the focus of today's debate — women's rights must be an integral component of efforts to rebuild justice and rule of law in conflict and post- conflict situations. I wish to address three areas. First, with regard to participation, we need to remove the obstacles blocking women's access to justice, which are often rooted in traditional and cultural attitudes, increase the number of women in national and international judiciary bodies and ensure that gender awareness informs their decisions. Secondly, with respect to protection, laws must be gender-sensitive, including by upholding the right of women to own land and by criminalizing sexual and gender-based violence; there should be no amnesty for such crimes. Thirdly, as to reparations, to be effective, they must have the strength to prevent the recurrence of violations and eliminate the root causes of gender inequality.

While Governments have the primary responsibility to steer such processes, the international community and other actors can provide critical support. In the fight against impunity for perpetrators of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, where women are often the victims, the International Criminal Court has a unique role in complementing the efforts of national courts when these are unable to bring perpetrators to justice. The United Nations also has a key role to play in assistance and capacity-building. Former judges and the specialized staff of United Nations ad hoc tribunals are potentially resources, as is cooperation with civil society organizations, in particular women- led organizations.

In 2015, the Security Council will hold a high- level meeting to review the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Secretary-General's report (S/2013/525) includes strategic measures to accelerate implementation, of which I would like to highlight three recommendations: increasing women's participation in United Nations peacekeeping and political missions, especially at the middle — and senior-management levels; reaching the target of 15 per cent spending for post-conflict peacebuilding projects on gender equality and women's empowerment; and systematically addressing all elements of resolution 1325 (2000) in the work of the Security Council.

Italy considers resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions to be key elements of its agenda for international peace and security. We are currently reviewing our national action plan with a view to accelerating its implementation over the next three years. Gender equality and women's empowerment are mainstreamed into development cooperation programmes. Specific projects on resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions are currently being implemented in Afghanistan, Lebanon, Somalia and Palestine. Italy supported the creation of the first centre for women victims of violence in Bethlehem, Palestine. In Libya, we are supporting the approval of a bill that equates victims of sexual violence with victims of war.

To conclude, we have the tools to ensure that the vision enshrined in resolution 1325 (2000) becomes reality. It is high time we use them to turn a new page in the lives of many women and girls around the world.