

**Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security-23 October 2007
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ITALY

Mr. Spatafora (Italy): The presence of Minister Osei-Adjei among us is an honour; it shows the significance that the Ghanaian presidency attaches to an issue of crucial importance, for reasons that we all know.

I should like, first of all, to thank the Secretary-General for his very focused statement. I also wish to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing. It would be very useful if we could have copies of his talking points, because he discussed several points that I have to build upon. I thank Special Adviser Mayanja for the passion that she expressed in her briefing, which I shall also revisit. I thank Ms. Sandler, Ad Interim Executive Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for her briefing. Italy is a true believer in and a strong supporter of UNIFEM, which is a shining example in the galaxy of funds within the United Nations system. If UNIFEM were not there, we would have to create it. Finally, I thank Ms. Torry, Coordinator of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, for her briefing, which was very passionate. I will also come back to that in a presentation that is cool, but all the more compelling because of its coolness.

In view of the constraints on our time, I shall touch on just a few points, dispensing with my talking points.

One of the points made by Mr. Guéhenno was the way in which we enhance and have clearly in mind the relationship between protection and empowerment. That is a double track, and we must make progress on both tracks. I will not elaborate on that here; it has been very eloquently addressed by many preceding speakers.

Another point which, as we have heard from those around this table, is very sensitive is that, as Mr. Guéhenno said, it is time to review the segmented approach. We could also put it the way that the Secretary-General and Ms. Mayanja did: we must decide whether or not to create new bodies or new mechanisms. I do not want to belabour this point. But I fully agree that it is now time to review the segmented approach. What we need is, to quote Mr. Guéhenno once again, a mutually reinforcing, more coordinated and integrated approach.

Thanks to the commitment of the Secretary General and the Secretariat, including, *inter alia*, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and UNIFEM, much progress has undoubtedly been made, as has been pointed out. But, as has also been said, much remains to be done. I think, however, that we have to go deeper into this point the relation between progress achieved and what remains to do.

I am not so sure that I would agree with what Ms. Sandler said, namely, that the presidential statement that is to follow is a message of hope. It is, of course, useful, but I wonder looking at it and at what we do from the point of view of those who are the victims on the ground, of those who suffer if, after six or seven years, what we produce, namely, presidential statements, meetings, plans of action and so on could be perceived as a message of frustration, as a message of despair, rather than as a message of hope, because what we manage to do is to do only presidential statements.

What I think and hear and I think Belgian Special Envoy Chevalier hinted at this is that we know very well what have to do. In a certain way, we do not need more information.

Of course, I fully agree that having more information is very useful. But if we really wanted to, we could act today on the information that we have. We do not need more information. We need to know how we can have an impact on the ground, because the benchmark of our credibility, the benchmark of our success comes, as Ms. Torry has told us, from the NGO point of view, that is to say, from the ground. In the last six years has the suffering diminished? Has the number of victims diminished? I am not so sure, listening to what has been said and I thank the French delegation for what we heard just now. The number of victims in Kivu alone in just the past few months is 27,000, if I remember well. Clearly, I think, we have had a setback.

So, I think the prism through which we have to look at what we must do is the awareness that there has been a setback, notwithstanding everything that we have done, or everybody's efforts, or the evidence of progress. But, at the end of the day, what counts is that there has been a setback, seen from the point of view of the people who suffer on the ground. It is from that point that we will have to start to act.