

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security (Sexual Violence)

23rd February 2012, Security Council Chamber

Statement by H.E. Mr. Kodama, Representative of the Japanese Permanent Mission to the UN.

Mr. Kodama (Japan): First of all, I would like to express my appreciation to you, Sir, for convening this important open debate on conflict-related sexual violence. I would also like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Wallström; the UnderSecretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Ladsous; and the Libyan representative of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for their insightful briefings.

Japan welcomes the Secretary-General's recent report (S/2012/33), which contains broad information on parties committing or responsible for acts of rape and other forms of sexual violence, including in postconflict situations and other situations of concern. We expect that the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements will be made fully functional in all situations experiencing conflict-related sexual violence, and that they will contribute to providing more specific and detailed information on conflict-related sexual violence both in the country-specific reports and in the thematic reports of the Secretary-General in the future.

We also appreciate that, for the first time, the report lists parties that are credibly suspected of committing or being responsible for patterns of rape and other forms of sexual violence in situations of armed conflict, as per the Security Council agenda. Japan strongly condemns the parties listed and calls on them to make specific, time-bound commitments to ceasing acts of sexual violence and bringing perpetrators to justice. If they fail to do so, the Security Council must respond with appropriate measures, including targeted measures, to hold those parties accountable.

In that regard, we commend the fact that the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo decided last December to add Ntabo Ntaberi Cheka, a militia leader responsible for mass rape, to the sanctions list. We are also encouraged to hear that earlier this month the Guinean court filed charges against Lieutenant Colonel Moussa Tiegboro Camara for the mass rape committed in Conakry in 2009.

Japan reiterates its full support for the mandate of Special Representative Wallström and commends her vigorous advocacy efforts towards ending conflict-related sexual violence. We welcome the fact that the Team of Experts has become fully operational and that it has so far visited four countries. Japan encourages those countries to continue cooperating with the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict, and hopes that they will use the Team's expertise to strengthen the rule of law, improve their justice systems and reform their security sectors to combat sexual violence.

As the Special Representative has pointed out on many occasions, sexual violence is never a by-product of conflict, and it can be prevented. We should focus more on the prevention side of the issue. Japan welcomes the framework of early warning signs specific to conflict-related sexual violence that has been developed based on collective analysis by the broader membership of the United Nations system. We encourage all stakeholders to incorporate the framework of early warning indicators into their immediate responses to conflict. We also expect that the Secretary-General's next report will include more analysis on the root causes of conflict-related sexual violence from the perspective of prevention.

Finally, I would like to underline the important role played by United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, a network of 13 United Nations entities chaired by Special Representative Wallström. United Nations Action is the key to a comprehensive and coordinated approach to preventing and responding to conflict-related sexual violence. Japan welcomes United Nations Action's strategic framework for 2011-12, which specifies the leading entities for each action. We expect that United Nations Action will further strengthen its network and activities on the ground, particularly by making tangible the positive changes for the survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.