



*Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations*

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STATEMENT

BY

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OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT THE

**SECURITY COUNCIL OPEN THEMATIC DEBATE**

ON

**WOMEN AND PEACE AND SECURITY**

**NEW YORK**

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*Please check against delivery*

**Mr. President,**

Thank you Mr. President. Kenya welcomes the leadership shown by Uganda in holding this debate during their presidency of the Council. This is a clear demonstration of just how important it is for us to tackle the growing problem of sexual and gender based violence if we are serious about resolving conflict, empowering women and advancing gender equality.

Mr. President, the issue that we are addressing today – Women, Peace and Security is important and deserves the international community's utmost attention and unequivocal support.

Nearly 10 years ago, this Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1325 which to date constitutes a basis for cooperation among all the parties concerned in the field of Women, Peace and Security. National ownership by all member states of this resolution is pertinent. We report that we have made modest gains in the creation of institutions and developing frameworks aimed at addressing violence against women in conflict situations. We still, however, sadly recognize that women and children continue to suffer disproportionately in times of conflict. Today, we recognize that violence against women in all its manifestation must be dealt with firmly and decisively. It is in this regard that I wish to reiterate Kenya's commitment to the full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325 whose adoption we consider a milestone.

**Mr. President,**

Kenya condemns all forms of violence against women including sexual violence and has always urged compliance with both humanitarian and human rights law during times of conflict. Women must be protected from violence and other atrocities during times of conflict. Additionally women must participate in rebuilding efforts, free from threats, intimidation and discrimination. It is pertinent, therefore, that in pre, ongoing and post conflict situations, the special needs of women be respected and concerns addressed. My delegation recognizes the fundamental factor that women's perceptions, concerns and opinions must form an integral part in all decision making processes at all levels in all peace and reconciliation processes. Indeed, traditional stereotypes that have consistently kept women away from negotiating tables are already and must continually be broken.

In Kenya, the newly promulgated Constitution has entrenched pertinent provisions relating to the participation of women at the highest levels. The legislature will now **have 47 and 16 seats** reserved for women in both the national assembly and the senate respectively, in addition to those who will be elected from the various constituencies. Furthermore, in all cases where special interests are represented in the legislature, the seats will be divided equally between men and women. As relates to national commissions and other bodies, the representation by women shall not be less than 30% of the total membership and a woman shall serve in one of the two highest positions in the entity.

Pursuant to this resolution, Kenya has made deliberate efforts to increase the participation of women in peacekeeping missions. Currently, we have women in uniform deployed in the peace keeping missions that Kenya is participating in and we are determined to increase this number.

**Mr. President,**

With the recent establishment of UN Women, we believe that women will have a stronger voice to speak on issues affecting them and including the implementation of Resolution 1325. The coordination of the various agencies, offices and mandate holders that deal with women and violence against women in particular will be very crucial to the implementation of this resolution.

While it is understood that the Security Council has an important role to play in dealing with peace and security matters internationally, States bear the primary responsibility to protect their citizens women and children in particular from violence. It is in this regard that my delegation calls for more concerted efforts by the international community and the Security Council to prevent and address the myriad of issues surrounding conflicts. Indeed, countries in conflict and those that have recently emerged from conflict have unique challenges which, if not comprehensively addressed, will lead to either a continuation or a relapse into conflict. The international community must provide the necessary framework and assistance to ensure that women do not suffer needlessly from conflict or its aftermath. The adoption of resolutions 1820, 1888 and 1889 clearly demonstrates an increased commitment on the part of the Security Council to address violence against women.

**Mr. President,**

Kenya expresses its deep gratitude to the Secretary General for the comprehensive report, which inter alia showcases the key sectors where tangible progress is being made in this context and identifies gaps and challenges in implementation. Kenya is particularly grateful for the indicators that have been suggested in the report and will seek to engage further with all member states and stakeholders in order to achieve the widest acceptance of them. My delegation believes that while indicators are preliminary and they form an important basis for overall monitoring of the implementation of Resolution 1325. Adhering to the indicators, however, will have budgetary implications for which support is requested. As relates to the implementation of the resolution, many challenges still continue to hamper countries' efforts to implement it: lack of capacity to implement gender mainstreaming initiatives, weak accountability mechanisms and limitations with respect to funding and resources. All these issues have to be addressed to ensure systematic integration and implementation of resolution 1325.

In conclusion, **Mr. President,** I wish to reiterate my country's commitment to implementing Resolution 1325. Indeed, we are happy to report the ongoing discussions being carried out amongst stakeholders in Kenya to develop a Plan of Action for the implementation of the resolution. We support the Secretary General in his continued efforts to mainstream 1325 throughout the UN System.

**Thank you.**