

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

Statement by Ms. Murmokaite, Permanent Mission of Lithuania to the United Nations

My delegation thanks Azerbaijan, as President for the month of October, for convening an open debate on women, peace and security. Lithuania welcomes the adoption of resolution 2122 (2013) today, which aims to streamline action within the United Nations system to implement resolution 1325 (2000) and other related decisions. It is important that the resolution clearly underlines the role of regional organizations and civil society. We appreciate the recommendations of the Secretary- General that provide a strategic look at and guidance on the implementation of existing commitments. We would also like to commend the work of Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women. and her first briefing to the Council.

Lithuania associates itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union. I will limit myself to a few points relating to the agenda on the rule of law and the participation of women.

Strengthening international and national justice responses to conflict-related violence against women is crucial. In the aftermath of conflict, it is vital to develop transitional justice mechanisms and institutions and to rebuild the rule of law to protect women's rights.

We must pay greater attention to providing better support for victims, including by ensuring protection for witnesses, victims and justice officials, providing reparation mechanisms and ensuring the systematic inclusion of women in all aspects of conflict resolution. United Nations special representatives, peacekeeping and political missions and United Nations agencies have a much greater role to play.

In recent years, the United Nations has augmented its involvement in establishing and supporting transitional justice measures, furthering women's rights in post- conflict societies. The United Nations-supported truth commissions in Mali, Kenya and Cote d'Ivoire have addressed gender-based crimes. Yet more must be done to ensure that transitional justice addresses a full range of gender-specific crimes, including human trafficking, early or forced marriages, the links between sexual violence and natural-resource extraction, withholding humanitarian assistance, enforced disappearances and forced displacement.

Transitional justice cannot be a substitute for accountability. It should not limit the access of victims to reparations. Blanket amnesties cannot be extended to conflict-related sexual violence. We must pay greater attention to delivering reparation programmes and funding. We continue to support the wider Council practice of including sexual violence in the designation criteria for targeted sanctions.

It is difficult to imagine tackling impunity without monitoring and reporting mechanisms. We welcome the Council's decision today that United Nations entities should do more systematic reporting to the Council, including analysis.

Lithuania sponsored Council resolution 2117 (2013), on small arms and light weapons, which links the illicit transfer and misuse of small arms to a disproportionate impact on violence against women and girls.

In previous statements my delegation has already spoken about the importance of ensuring the empowerment of women. Their participation at all levels of economic, political and social life is as crucial to sustainable peace as it is to poverty reduction, economic recovery and sustainable development. We welcome the the Peacebuilding Commission's declaration on women's economic empowerment for peacebuilding.

The recent decrease in women's share of senior positions in United Nations field operations should be reversed. Efforts by the United Nations to retain, attract and support women staff should be complemented by efforts by Member States to consistently nominate more female candidates.

Notably greater involvement of women — from mediation, restoring the rule of law and governance to participation in post-conflict electoral processes — continues to require commitment and attention. It also requires greater dedicated resourcing, particularly for civil society groups working on the ground.

