

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, (Conflict Related Sexual Violence)  
23 February 2012, Security Council Chamber

*Statement by H.E Ms.Lucas, Permanent Representative of Luxembourg*

I fully associate myself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union. I thank you sincerely, Mr. President, for providing the opportunity to review the progress achieved and the challenges ahead in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions, in particular the provisions on conflict-related sexual violence.

We welcome the start of implementation in the field, of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements and hope that the difficulties remaining in collecting and verifying information and in establishing shared databases will soon be resolved.

We fully support the new United Nations initiatives in the fight against conflict-related sexual violence, in particular the development of early warning indicators to assist United Nations personnel on the ground in identifying early warning signs specific to acts of sexual violence and to better prevent such violence, as well as the importance attached to the inclusion in ceasefire and peace agreements of provisions on conflict-related sexual violence aimed at achieving durable peace.

The report of the Secretary-General (S/2012/33) illustrates in a most alarming way how impunity linked to human rights abuses of the past, in particular acts of sexual violence perpetrated in armed conflict, is a major factor undermining early recovery and peace consolidation, and frequently allows sexual violence to persist. In that context, it is particularly disturbing, as the report indicates and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict also noted today, that in many countries the alleged perpetrators of sexual violence are not prosecuted for their acts, but are often promoted or appointed to senior Government positions in national institutions. The impunity of such high-ranking officers is unacceptable and prevents communities emerging from conflict to recover sustainably.

I echo the Secretary-General's call on the Security Council to employ all means at its disposal to fight conflict-related sexual violence, including the use of referrals to the International Criminal Court, and to increase pressure on the perpetrators of sexual violence through the adoption of targeted and graduated measures by relevant sanctions committees. The fight against impunity is also of major importance to the prevention of sexual violence.

In that context, allow me to highlight a positive development that has taken place since the publication of the Secretary-General's report. It was referred to today by the Special Representative, and I particularly value it in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea country specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. I am referring to the indictment under Guinean justice of Lieutenant Colonel Moussa Tiegboro Camara, who is suspected of being one of the main persons responsible for the violence that occurred, including mass rape, in the Conakry stadium on 28 September 2009. This is an important step in the right direction.

Since the most recent public debate of the Council on the issue at hand (S/PV.6642) on 28 October 2011, Luxembourg has further intensified its commitment to supporting women in armed conflict, including through its support of the work of the Team of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. This is our response to the Secretary-General's call on Member States, reiterated in this year's report, to provide the resources necessary to enable the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a sub-regional workshop was organized in November 2011 in Goma, with the support of Luxembourg, by the Office of Gender Affairs of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to promote exchanges of experiences among women's organizations in the Great Lakes region in the areas of peace, security and prevention of election-related violence. The workshop sought to help reduce the risk of the outbreak of conflict before, during and after elections. Training was also offered to improve conditions in order to promote women's participation in provincial and local elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

With the support of Luxembourg, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has been able to implement similar initiatives in Timor-Leste and in Haiti. This year, again with our support, a national workshop in the Republic of South Sudan and a workshop for West Africa in Liberia will be held with the shared objective of strengthening the contributions of United Nations peacekeeping operations to increasing women's representation at all levels within national, regional and international institutions and to reinforcing mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict.

The fight against conflict-related sexual violence is a moral obligation that we must fulfil together. Luxembourg can be counted on to continue its contribution to that collective effort.