

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

**Mr. Heller** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico would like to commend you, Mr. President, for convening this recurring open debate on women, peace and security. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2007/567) on recent activities with regard to that issue.

In the seven years that have transpired since the historic adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), many countries, international organizations and civil society organizations have spoken in the Security Council to reaffirm their commitment to achieve the full implementation of the resolution. We appreciate the progress made and the work done by the Organization in the area of capacity building to improve the protection of women's rights, as well as its efforts to develop a methodology that will make possible more accurate measurement of the progress made in this field. However, we are concerned that the will that has been expressed in that regard has not resulted in an integrated and coordinated strategy, either within the United Nations system or in affected States, that would make it possible to overcome the diffused nature of efforts undertaken.

We completely agree that countries themselves have a great deal of responsibility for mainstreaming the gender perspective into peace and security issues. It is only through joint implementation of concerted efforts at the international and national levels that we will be able to achieve substantial benefits for women affected by armed conflict.

Women are not passive actors in highly complex emergency situations. They are nevertheless especially vulnerable to the marginalization, poverty and psychological and physical violence that such situations entail. Moreover, women often become targets of war, as they are perceived to embody the cultural and ethnic identities of their societies. In becoming pillars of their communities in times of conflict, their well-being and integrity are intrinsically bound up with the protection of men and children. It is for that reason that implementing the commitments contained in resolution 1325 (2000) cannot be seen as a matter limited solely to ensuring the protection of part of society, but rather as a precondition for achieving sustainable peace for all. Carrying out that task requires short-, medium- and long-term measures. I shall now refer to those that Mexico believes to be the most urgent.

First, there is a need to ratify and unconditionally implement the existing international framework — especially as regards international humanitarian law — including human rights instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Second, all peacekeeping operations approved by the Security Council should include mandates with regard to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Third, we must strengthen the International Criminal Court, so that, as feasible, it can try those guilty of sexual violence in the context of armed conflict — which is a crime against humanity under the Rome Statute.

Fourth, we must implement measures in all areas to ensure security and access for humanitarian personnel to populations in need of assistance in conflict areas.

Fifth, there is a need for sustained cooperation and coordination between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and United Nations bodies carrying out programmes to benefit women on the ground, such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the United Nations Population Fund.

Sixth, we must establish across-the-board mandatory training programmes in gender issues for United Nations staff working in the areas of peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance.

Seventh, we must put in place effective domestic legislative frameworks to eradicate impunity and establish educational programmes and awarenessraising campaigns on the issue of women's rights, in order to eliminate cultural prejudices against women and empower women to defend themselves against abuses to which they may be subject.

Eighth, and last, we must systematically include women — especially from non-governmental organizations — in the taking of decisions during peace and reconstruction processes. Mexico commends the experience of UNIFEM in that regard. We have therefore contributed to the work it is doing to ensure the participation of women from civil society in Haiti's peace process, which could be a model in other situations.

Before I conclude, I would like to express Mexico's deep concern at the growing number of cases of sexual abuse against women during armed conflict, and even in the process of peacebuilding. Such recent cases as those in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Sudan and Iraq, to mention a few, cannot be tolerated either by the Governments of those countries or by the international community. The international community must take concrete steps to eradicate such practices.

The adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was the outcome of the political resolve of the members of the Security Council to provide protection for the millions of women affected by armed conflict. The time has come to translate the resolution into real action on the ground.