

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

Statement by H.E. Bouchaara, Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations

Allow me at the outset, on behalf of the Moroccan delegation, to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing the debate.

My delegation welcomes the report (S/2012/33) of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010) on conflict-related sexual violence. I also take the opportunity to thank Ms. Margot Wallström, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, for her constructive and substantive briefing and to pay tribute to her efforts to promote the protection of women against violence in conflict situations. Our thanks also go to Mr. Hervé Ladsous and to Ms. Amina Megheirbi on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security. I wish to congratulate the NGO Working Group in particular for its commendable work in raising awareness with respect to members of the Council.

Our debate today gives us the opportunity to take stock of the implementation of the commitments made under resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010), as well as the progress achieved in the implementation of the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements established in line with resolution 1960 (2010). The convening of this debate also allows us to undertake a more in-depth reflection on the psychological impact and the consequences of conflict related sexual violence against women, girls and children, as well as on the need to identify with greater determination ways and means of ensuring optimal protection for the victims of such violence. The suffering endured by women during conflict and the various forms of exclusion and social injustice that they suffer from within their communities and families require more resolute joint action and a stronger commitment to ensure that they benefit from the maximum level of protection.

The adoption of resolution 1960 (2010) in December 2010 was one element of a series of initiatives aimed at bolstering the existing legal toolkit for tackling conflict-related sexual violence. We believe that the monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements established under that resolution should allow for the collection of objective, reliable and credible data on acts of sexual violence. We would also like to see these arrangements serve as a basis for comprehensive strategies to counter sexual violence by strengthening preventive measures, improving medical and psychological support services, and ensuring access to justice for victims.

My delegation would also like to commend the efforts made by the Council to combat sexual violence, in particular with respect to the preparation of the terms of reference for women's protection advisers, in cooperation with the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

The report of the Secretary-General also takes stock of situations of sexual violence in several regions of the world and of the measures taken by the parties in conflict to put an end to those acts by identifying those responsible, combating impunity of the perpetrators and masterminds, and making available medical, psychological and social assistance for victims and their families.

While it is the responsibility of the parties to a conflict to put an end to the grave consequences of sexual violence during conflict for women and girls, coordinated and sustained action by the United Nations, through its various organs, agencies and specialized programmes, is crucial to progress in existing initiatives. The Kingdom of Morocco is convinced that the effective implementation of Security Council resolutions on conflict-related sexual violence also requires improved coordination among the various national and international actors involved in the combat against sexual violence, as well as a more resolute and sustained commitment on the part of the United Nations in the area of technical assistance and capacity-building. The international community must stand shoulder to shoulder and act in a spirit of solidarity in guaranteeing women who have fallen victim to sexual violence the right to make their voices heard and to express their suffering, bearing in mind our obligation to listen to them, protect them and to ensure that such crimes never again go unpunished.