



PAKISTAN

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

in the open debate on

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

at the

SECURITY COUNCIL

29 October 2003

Pakistan's Statement on Women, Peace and Security
at the Security Council
(29 October 2003)

Mr. President,

I wish to express my delegation's appreciation to you for convening this open debate to mark the third anniversary of the adoption of the Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The resolution elevated women from being a hapless victim of conflict situations, to an equal stakeholder in prevention and resolution of conflicts, and rehabilitation in post conflict situation. Today's meeting provides us with an opportunity to review the progress and advance its implementation.

Mr. President,

2. Human rights instruments – particularly the Geneva Conventions proscribe torture, violence, rape and other forms of sexual violence and other ill treatment of women during conflicts. The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court pronounces these acts in the context of armed conflict as crimes against humanity. These injunctions notwithstanding, women's suffering in conflict situation have perpetuated. Despite growing awareness of their plight and increased focus on their protection, women continue to be the prime victim of calamities – both natural and man-made – in conflict situations.

3. The suffering of women in the on-going freedom struggle in Jammu and Kashmir is symbolic of the suffering of women worldwide. The Indian army uses rape in this deeply conservative society as a weapon to punish, intimidate, coerce, humiliate or degrade. Investigations by human rights groups into allegations of gang rape by the Indian security forces show that it was being routinely used in search-and-cordon operations. There is generally a pattern of impunity and non-accountability when it comes to incidents of rape or violence. Investigations are more a cover-up than an inquiry. Human rights organizations testified that in Jammu and Kashmir since 1992 "rape and ill-treatment of women are usually reported to have taken place during counter-insurgency operations" by Indian forces. The Asia Watch and Physicians for Human Rights documented the extensive use of rape by the occupation forces designed "to punish and humiliate the entire community." Amnesty International has reported that "harassment, abduction, rape and deliberate and arbitrary killings perpetrated by pro-Indian "renegades" in Kashmir" are also carried out "with the support of the (Indian) security forces."

4. There are thousands of destitute women in Kashmir illustrating another manifestation of the conflict. They include women who have been widowed, or whose husbands have been maimed, or have disappeared, or are in arbitrary

detention. We urge the United Nations and non-governmental organizations to prepare a survey of the number of such destitute Kashmiri women. The international community should take appropriate measures to provide help and compensation to these Kashmiri women. We urge humanitarian agencies, specially the ICRC, to act as the instrument and avenue for such relief distribution. Political considerations should not stand in the way of international humanitarian agencies responding to the plight of Kashmir women and children suffering from the long and bloody conflict in their homeland.

5. Unfortunately, such crimes against women do not remain limited to situations of armed conflicts. A pattern of targeted violence against women in situations of communal disturbance within the national borders has also been witnessed. Last year's anti Muslim violence in the Indian state of Gujrat saw the most abhorrent illustration of crimes against women. The report of Human Rights Watch has extensively documented these crimes, which included gang rape, burning alive and murder of women. In Afghanistan where the destitution of women was a pervasive consequence of two decades of conflict, violence against women has been used as a tool to terrorize populations, force displacement and demoralize adversaries.

Mr. President,

6. By adopting resolution 1325, the Security Council reaffirmed its deep concern at violence against women particularly in armed conflict. It also acknowledged women's possible positive contribution in prevention and resolution of conflicts as well as in post conflict consolidation and rehabilitation. The need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping has also been affirmed. We thank the Under-Secretary General Guehenno for his briefing on DPKO's efforts to implement resolution 1325 in the UN peacekeeping missions. We also thank Ms. Amy Smyth the Senior Gender Adviser to MONUC for sharing with us her experience in implementation of the resolution. The two presentations have given the Council an insight into the normative and operational implementation of resolution 1325.

7. The best way to protect women from the scourge of armed conflict is to prevent and resolve conflicts. The Security Council, as the organ of the United Nations responsible for maintenance of international peace and security must strengthen its capacity to do so. We must also stress the observance and implementation of the principles of international humanitarian law and human rights in international conflicts. We believe the Council must not only ensure prompt and effective responses in crisis situations irrespective of their geographical locations but also avoid selectivity in the implementation of its resolutions. We need greater international solidarity, responsibility and respect for the UN's collective decisions and determination to implement them. The Charter contains provisions, including in Chapter VI, which can be utilized for the purpose of promoting implementation of Council resolutions.

8. My delegation in the open meeting of the Council to discuss women and armed conflict last year, had suggested the following measures for the Council's consideration, which we believe are still valid and applicable:

First, adoption of a declaration that the targeting of women, especially the use of rape as an instrument of war, will be considered a "crime", susceptible to national and international punishment.

Second, initiation of a study of recent and ongoing conflict situations to identify crimes committed against women, with a view to seeking redress and compensation for the victims;

Third, current and future UN peacekeeping operations be required to monitor and regularly report to the Security Council on the situation of women and girls in their mission areas;

Fourth, encourage the fullest possible participation of women in peace processes as well in post-conflict peace-building, including in reintegration, reconstruction and rehabilitation of societies in the post-conflict phase.

Fifth, ask the UN's specialized organs and agencies to evolve ways to address the special needs of women and girls affected by conflict including health and psychological care.

Sixth, the Security Council may involve other UN bodies, as well as representatives of the civil society, perhaps using the Arria Formula, for a comprehensive discussion to promote such recommendations and actions.

I thank you, Mr. President.