

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
Tuesday, 26th October 2010, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by H.E. Mr. Gonzalo Gutiérrez, Permanent Representative of Peru to the United Nations

I thank you, Sir, for having convened this open debate on resolution 1325 (2000) and the role of women as it relates to peace and security. I also thank the Secretary-General for having introduced his report S/2010/498, and the others who have spoken today.

I welcome the presence among us of President Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN Women and a very distinguished representative of Latin America.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was a crucial milestone, which we must duly underscore because it was with the adoption of that resolution that this topic took its place on the agenda of the Security Council and was therefore no longer to be considered a matter of secondary importance. Instead, it took on a crucial and relevant role in efforts towards international peace and security.

Resolution 1325 (2000) was the starting point for subsequent developments in the Security Council related to this topic, aimed at ensuring the participation of women in peacekeeping, peacebuilding and the fight against sexual violence against women and girls. For this reason, that resolution, together with resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009), has provided the international community with a framework for addressing the needs of women in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Ten years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we reiterate that the participation of women must be an integral part of peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. This is the view of my country, which currently has a number of female military observers. However, we wish to broaden the participation of women, and Peru is therefore training female personnel, who we hope will be ready for deployment in the second half of 2011.

As indicated by the Secretary-General in his report on women's participation in peacebuilding (S/2010/466), women are decisive agents in the three pillars of lasting peace: economic recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy. In that regard, we agree with the Secretary-General that the participation of women in peace processes allows for the integration of a gender perspective in post-conflict planning, which is essential to ensuring the participation of women in long-term peacebuilding.

On numerous occasions in this Chamber, we have heard truly moving testimony from women victims of sexual violence. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict has stated that this type of violence is a tactic of war and as such can be planned for and predicted. We cannot allow it in any way to be considered an inevitable consequence of armed conflict.

However, I must say, that recent events have unfortunately shown us that the capacity to respond to such acts must be greatly strengthened. As my country has stated on other occasions, a crucial consideration in addressing this problem is having information that would allow us to take preventive measures and to respond swiftly to such situations. We must explore mechanisms that allow for reliable information exchange on acts of sexual violence in order to take measures aimed at reducing and fighting this scourge. It is the view of my delegation that the capacity for such information exchange among United Nations agencies, the various committees of the Security Council and the Working Group on Children in Armed Conflict should be substantially strengthened.

Furthermore, it is important for military personnel deployed on the ground to undergo training and awareness-raising to enable them to respond appropriately to situations of sexual violence.

We must also bear in mind that, as the Secretary-General recalled, the security of women and girls is not guaranteed once a conflict has come to an end. We must therefore ensure that there is a focus in post-conflict phases on the strengthening of the rule of law that ensures respect for their rights and access to justice. Fighting impunity for gender-based violence is essential in the peacebuilding process, as noted by the Peacebuilding Commission Working Group on Lessons Learned.

With regard to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) throughout the United Nations system, the Secretary-General, in a spirit of great transparency, has recognized that the 2008-2009 Action Plan illuminated the fragmentation in implementation initiatives, which requires a comprehensive strategy to ensure that efforts do not go to waste.

The indicators that have been presented form, in this respect, the basis for a comprehensive consideration of the progress made by the United Nations system and Member States in the priority areas of prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery. These clearly reflect the complementary nature of resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009). We also agree with the Secretary-General that UN Women could serve as the coordinating body for the follow-up on these indicators.

As stated in the Secretary-General's report, resolution 1325 (2000) has played an important role in facilitating the participation of non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, in promoting women's participation in peace processes.

In this regard, we should like to thank the Permanent Missions of Austria, Mexico and the United Kingdom for having convened an Arria Formula meeting on 19 October, which allowed us to learn more about the work being carried out by various organizations on the ground and to gain a better understanding of the scope and challenges of resolution 1325 (2000).

Ten years after the adoption of the resolution, we believe that the Security Council should consider a number of the recommendations put forth by the Secretary-General, in particular the possibility of establishing a set of objectives, goals and indicators for the next 10 years, or of creating a working group to follow up on the resolution.

We have made progress in recognizing the importance of the participation of women in peace and security. However, there are many challenges that we have yet to tackle, given that this is a matter of changing the lives of women and girls, who have the right to live free from fear and violence, enjoying respect and equal opportunities.