

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security – 29 October 2008
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RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Ms. Rachel Mayanja, Ms. Inés Alberdi, Ms. Sarah Taylor and Mr. Alain Le Roy for the very useful information that they provided, and we thank the Secretary-General for the preparation of his thematic report (S/2008/622).

Resolution 1325 (2000) remains our most important guideline in enhancing the role of women in conflict prevention and settlement, post-conflict rehabilitation and the protection of women's rights during conflicts. We must implement the resolution's provisions by creating equal opportunities for women to participate actively in all peacekeeping and security efforts and in enhancing their role in decision-making. To that end, we must ensure genuine overall gender equality. Therefore, efforts in that area should be undertaken not only by the Security Council, but also by other relevant United Nations organs, including the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council and the Commission on the Status of Women.

Women can make an even greater contribution to conflict prevention and settlement in all their aspects. In post-conflict rehabilitation, we must make broader use of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as a fundamental document. We must also devote greater attention to gender mainstreaming in United Nations efforts to reduce poverty and address inequality as sources of conflict. Here, we could refer to, *inter alia*, increased participation by women in decision-making on social and economic issues and in establishing national frameworks for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

We welcome the concrete steps taken by the United Nations system to guarantee the exercise of women's rights. We believe that there is a need to make more active use of the expertise of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. At the same time, we note that the Secretary-General's report does not provide a comprehensive response to the Council's earlier question regarding the impact of armed conflict on women and girls in situations on the Council's agenda. Only one page is devoted to that very important topic, and a whole set of serious issues is simply overlooked. Another issue, the protection of women in armed conflict, is virtually reduced to the problem of sexual violence, while other crimes against women are ignored. Such an approach significantly reduces the tasks mandated by resolution 1325 (2000). From the perspective of the Security Council's Charter objectives, it should focus first and foremost on the most pressing, large-scale armed conflicts.

The United Nations should, as a priority, respond to systematic mass violence against women and children. Equal attention should be given to all categories of such violence in conflicts. Of serious concern are cases in which women and children are killed or injured, including as a result of the indiscriminate or excessive use of force. Unfortunately, recent examples of that can be found in many parts of the world. Such crimes often go unpunished or are justified by citing the unavoidable nature of so-called collateral damage. We believe that the Council should assess such cases in an unbiased and principled manner.

It is important that gender mainstreaming in United Nations work, including in the field, yield concrete results in the protection and advancement of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict societies. That requires balanced system-wide approaches that provide, first and foremost, for the full participation of women themselves in those processes.