

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict- Affected Situations, October 18th, 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Zagaynov, Permanent Mission of Russian Federation to the United Nations

I would like to thank the Azerbaijani presidency for organizing this meeting. We are also grateful to the Secretary-General and others who spoke, for their assessments and very useful information.

For over a decade now, resolution 1325 (2000) has clearly confirmed its vital role and importance in strengthening the role of women in the prevention and settlement of armed conflicts and during post- conflict reconstruction, as well as in their protection during such conflicts. Unfortunately, despite numerous efforts, women continue to fall victim to various forms of violence. That is why we believe that more attention needs to be given to all categories of such crimes. Such a balanced approach is enshrined in resolution 1325 (2000). Cases of women and children being killed and getting injured are a cause for serious concern, including as a result of the indiscriminate or excessive use of force. We think it is unacceptable to simply turn a blind eye to such crimes or to justify them as so-called inevitable acts of collateral damage, which contradicts provisions in the Geneva Conventions.

One of the main characteristics of the world today is the significant number of crises in which women suffer. At the same time, not all of those situations pose a threat to international peace and security that would require intervention by the Security Council. Let us recall that issues of gender violence fall within the framework of mandates tackled not only by the Security Council but also by the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council, and the Commission on the Status of Women. We must abide by the existing principles of the division of labour within our Organization, without duplicating the efforts and competencies of the various bodies.

We believe that the Council's effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) requires an unwavering focus on a decisive mandate that approaches women's issues in the context of international peace and security and other such issues within its agenda.

We have carefully familiarized ourselves with the report of the Secretary-General prepared for today's meeting (S/2013/525). We should like to point out that it is factually incomplete. We believe that in the future, such reports should consider the nature of violence against women in the context of the maintenance of international peace and security in a more balanced way, as stipulated by resolution 1325 (2000).

As far as facts in the report are concerned, they have been compiled on the basis of the first third of the assessment indicators on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), and we still have questions regarding the usefulness and relevance of individual indicators, as well as the scope for applying them. We believe that work on indicators, which is still undergoing approval, must be transparent and open in nature.

After all, issues of international peace and security are of interest to all States Members of the United Nations. We do not share the report's concept of using national plans of action for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) as an assessment tool for States' policies to improve the overall status of women. Relevant national plans ought to be prepared voluntarily by those States that find themselves in situations of armed conflict. If other States wish to elaborate similar national plans, that is clearly their right. However, the voluntary decision of individual States to do that should not mean that everyone is obliged to do so.

We are convinced of the significantly positive potential of women's participation in various aspects of the settlement of armed conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. Women must not only be seen as victims

of armed conflicts. That in itself is discriminatory. The direct involvement of women in preventing and settling armed conflicts is, in our opinion, an important prerequisite for overcoming violence against women. We wish to express our satisfaction that resolution 2122 (2013), adopted today, pays a significant amount of attention to ways of including women in such processes, in line with resolution 1325 (2000). Clearly, gender issues must be taken into account when mobilizing peacekeeping forces.

It is just as important to include such issues in the mandates of relevant missions. We urge States to tackle those issues not in a predetermined way, but by being mindful of individual situations. Such a differentiated approach must also be applied when giving the United Nations system instructions on how to integrate gender issues into their mandates. They have clear mandates, and for the majority of them, issues of women, peace and security are not an absolute priority but merely one of a number of factors within the framework of action aimed at preventing and resolving armed conflict and post-conflict situations. Let us not forget that the leading role in protecting women at all stages of armed conflict lies with national Governments, while measures taken by bodies of the United Nations system and by civil society must be aimed at backing and complimenting efforts made by States.

We do not share the point of view that establishing a specialized Security Council mechanism for gender issues would be useful. We believe that ensuring the effectiveness of the existing mechanisms for implementing resolution 1325 (2000) does not hinge on creating new bureaucratic procedures but rather on improving the coordination and accountability of existing mechanisms under the leadership of UN Women.