

**Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
October 2014, Security Council Chamber**

Statement by Mr. Vitrenko, Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations

I thank you, Madam President, for holding today's open debate on the highly important issue of displaced women and girls. We would also like to thank the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Women and the other invitees for their substantive briefings.

Ukraine welcomes the adoption of the presidential statement S/PRST/2014/21 earlier today.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union. However, we wish share some observations in our national capacity.

The year of 2014 marks 14 years since the adoption of the landmark resolution 1325 (2000), which established the basis for the women and peace and security agenda and called for special protection for and the full and equal participation of women in all conflict prevention, resolution and post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. Ukraine remains fully committed to the implementation of the the resolution, as well as to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the outcome documents of the Beijing Conference and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

A national action plan in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000) to promote women's equal and full participation as active agents in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peacebuilding and peacekeeping, as well as to incorporate the gender perspective in all areas of peacebuilding, is being developed by the Government of Ukraine, in close consultation with United Nations agencies and civil society. The plan will provide for a number of practical steps aimed at promoting women's greater participation in political, economic and social life, as well as addressing the current challenges faced by women and girls, first and foremost those caused by the ongoing foreign aggression against our country.

Despite certain setbacks affecting women in Ukraine, including the budget cuts caused by more than six months of foreign aggression, Ukraine, in close cooperation with its international partners, is making efforts to address imbalances based on gender and to review its gender policies with the view to promoting the effective participation of women in public and political life and to empower them.

Ukrainian society is united. Our country is fully committed to build on the momentum inspired by our European choice and to ensure access to crucial services for those women and girls who are currently internally displaced and, ultimately, to make women in Ukraine equal and active members of society who are able to lead and coordinate in promoting their rights.

In its recent report, the United Nations human rights monitoring mission in Ukraine finds that in the Donetsk region women comprise 15 per cent of those killed and 15 per cent of those wounded as a result of the conflict. Women who have remained in the area are forced to clean, cook and wash clothes for the members of illegal armed groups supported by Russia. Groups of volunteers helping to evacuate people received first-hand reports of rape or detention of women at check-points. There

have also been incidents of abductions of women by illegal armed groups whose whereabouts remain unknown.

We are particularly alarmed by reports of the abduction of people in the territory of Ukraine and their subsequent illegal transfer to the Russian Federation for interrogation. Ukrainian servicewoman Nadiya Savchenko, captured in the Luhansk region in July without any legal grounds, remains in a detention facility in the Russian Federation, where she is subjected to inhuman practices that constitute a flagrant violation of international law and obligations under bilateral treaties. We demand the immediate release of Ms. Savchenko and will do everything possible to ensure that those involved in her abduction and illegal detention are brought to justice.

This morning Russian delegation stated that currently there are 830,000 Ukrainian refugees on Russian territory. That number cannot be trusted, as it has not been independently verified and comes from a single source, Russian Federation itself. Yet, what Russian delegation failed to mention in the first place is that the situation of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine is of Russia's own making. It is a direct consequence of its aggression against Ukraine, which started with invasion and occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, an integral part of Ukraine, and continued with the creating and now fuelling of conflict in the east of my country.

The Russian delegation also did not mention that, according to the Secretary-General, his Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and other authoritative sources, at this stage the humanitarian situation is being managed properly by the Government of Ukraine, in coordination with our international partners. It is exactly in that context that we provided every assistance to one of today's briefers, Mr. Chaloka Beyani, Special Rapporteur on the human rights of IDPs, during his visit to Ukraine.

According to the latest official statistics, the number of IDPs in Ukraine stands 275,489 people. Two thirds of adult IDPs are women. The Government fully realizes their specific needs, as most IDP families include elderly and unaccompanied women with children. A national law on IDPs was adopted on 20 October this year. It aims at ensuring the rights and freedoms of IDPs, including women, and at addressing key issues in this area, including by facilitating humanitarian assistance. Measures to strengthen the capacity of our communities to absorb IDPs are being undertaken by the Government. The issue of IDP women will be of particular concern in the course of elaborating, adopting and implementing the national action plan in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000).

The Russian delegation also forgot to mention its so-called humanitarian convoys sent to Ukraine in clear violation of the international and national law, in a unilateral and shadowy manner without involvement by the International Committee of the Red Cross, let alone Ukrainian Government consent. Should Moscow proceed with the fourth such convoy as it has announced today, it will be yet another violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

Time and again we have stressed that the only way that Russia can contribute to the alleviation of the humanitarian situation it has created in the east of Ukraine is to stop waging a hybrid war against my country, to halt sponsoring and arming terrorists, to fully withdraw its troops and mercenaries and to establish effective and verifiable border control.