

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, (Conflict Related Sexual Violence)  
23 February 2012, Security Council Chamber

*Statement by H.E Mr. De Laiglesia, Permanent Representative of Spain*

Spain welcomes today's thematic debate on women and peace and security, and specifically on sexual violence in conflict, which is a priority issue for my Government. We appreciate the presidency of Togo's initiative in holding this debate, and we hope that the Council will continue addressing the issue regularly.

We also thank the Secretary-General for his report on Conflict-related sexual violence (S/2012/33) and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, Ms. Wallström, for her briefing. We endorse the recommendations in the report and we fully support the work and mandate of the Special Representative, as established in resolutions 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010), as well as that of the Group of Experts on the Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflict.

Spain associates itself with the statement made by the observer of the European Union. I will only make some brief observations in my national capacity.

In recent months, in application of Spain's national action plan on resolution 1325 (2000) and other associated resolutions, we have engaged in several activities, especially in the area of training, that I wish to highlight. We are firmly convinced that training is an essential aspect of our efforts to prevent sexual violence in conflict.

First, last November the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation and the Ministry of Defence organized, together with the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defence of the Netherlands, the second offering of the international pilot course on the gender perspective in peacekeeping operations, which took place in The Hague. The purpose of the seminars is to promote the inclusion of the gender perspective in all peacebuilding activities and to ensure specific training of personnel participating in those missions. We plan to continue to offer the courses every six months, alternating between the Netherlands and Spain.

Moreover, in order to raise the profile of gender advisers and ensure the inclusion of the gender perspective in peacekeeping missions, the Ministry of Defence of Spain organized a course in late October 2011 on the gender perspective in operations, with conferences for members of the armed forces on equal opportunity, setting norms on gender issues, and the fight against rape and sexual violence in conflict.

The next course for high officials in peacekeeping operations, to be organized in coordination with the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and held in May in Kigali, Rwanda will deal specifically with the issue before us today, with particular emphasis on the fight against sexual violence in conflict.

My Government is currently conducting its third review of the national action plan on women and peace and security, incorporating the recommendations contained in the Secretary-General's reports and in the resolutions, statements and decisions of the Security Council, especially those relating to sexual violence in conflict. My delegation welcomes the fact that the members of the Security Council have also been able to reach agreement on this important issue.

Finally, I again thank the Special Representative for her words and for her work. We hope that her work and the work of her Team of Experts, together with UN-Women, in cooperation with all other actors, will help to cement the commitments needed to finally put an end to sexual violence in

conflict. We hope that the Council will continue to regularly invite the Special Representative to provide updated information on the progress of her important mandate.