



TUNISIA

Women and Peace and Security

Statement at the

open debate of the Security Council
on the occasion
of the 10th anniversary of resolution 1325

26 October 2010

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. Chairman,

1. My delegation is particularly pleased to participate in this debate on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the Security Council resolution 1325, a landmark resolution of which Tunisia, as a non-permanent member in 2000, was among the initiators, along with Bangladesh, Namibia, Canada, Jamaica and Mali.

2. My country attaches a great importance to this topic and wishes to underscore, through this participation, its strong commitment to the protection of women in conflict and post conflict situations as well as to the full implementation of resolution 1325 in all its aspects.

3. Tunisia's interest in this subject stems from its longstanding commitment to advance gender equality and women empowerment, a strategic choice made by my country upon its independence in 1956 and which has become an integral part of its national development policy. The advanced status enjoyed today by Tunisian women who hold 30% of decision-making and responsibility positions, is one the most prominent results of such a choice.

4. My country firmly believes that peace, development and democracy cannot be achieved and cannot be sustained without an active involvement of women in public life and in decision making.

Mr. Chairman,

5. The tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 is a propitious occasion to take stock of progress, recognize the achievements and identify the shortcomings.

6- Resolution 1325 laid out a normative framework which has guided the UN work on gender mainstreaming policies across a broad spectrum of functions and projects in which the UN is engaged.

7. It should be recognized that today there is greater awareness of, as well as an increased focus on, addressing sexual violence in conflict. It has become widely accepted that women have a critically important contribution to make regarding how peace could be achieved and maintained and therefore women's views are more and more taken into account in the planning and execution of peace processes, peacekeeping operations and post-conflict recovery.

8. The appointment of a special representative of the Secretary General to combat sexual violence and the establishment of UN Women are the most recent achievements in this regard.

9- However, despite 10 years of efforts and progress, significant achievements are yet difficult to identify on the ground. Commitments towards the protection of women and girls have fallen short of the pledges made. Violence against women and girls in conflict and post conflict situations continue to be devastating especially in Africa.

10. The mass rape committed in July 2010 in the in the eastern provinces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, demonstrates that women remain deliberate targets of gender based violence, in particular sexual violence. These shameful crimes, and others, are a reminder that we remain far from meeting the goals set in resolution 1325.

11. Moreover, while women are widely recognized as effective agents of peace, they still have little access to decision making positions. Their participation in peace and security processes remain far below desired levels and the gender composition of peace keeping missions is still unbalanced.

12. In short, major gaps in the implementation of resolution 1325 and its follow up resolutions remain to be addressed.

Mr. Chairman,

13. The celebration of the 10th anniversary of resolution 1325 is also an occasion to reinvigorate our efforts at the international and national levels.

14. Internationally, our efforts need to be channeled through a single coherent and coordinated approach, guided by a clear framework with concrete and specific goals and targets, and supported by a meaningful set of indicators to track progress.

15. It should be recognized though, that national ownership of the resolution is the key approach to ensure its effective implementation. It is on Member States that rests the prime responsibility to combat the use of rape as a tool of war, to increase the participation of women in peace operations and peace talks, to protect and promote the rights of women and girls and to integrate the gender perspective in different policy areas.

16. Member States have a particularly important contribution in ensuring the achievement of commitments in the area of women and peace and security through the development of national action plans for the implementation of resolution 1325. Capacity building and adequate funding to implement such plans especially in developing countries remain a challenge that need to be addressed.

17. My delegation is pleased to say in this regard that Tunisia is about to finalize and adopt shortly its national action plan for the implementation of resolution 1325.

18. This national plan will highlight the following main priorities:

- Encourage women's training in peacekeeping, peace building and international humanitarian law to provide qualified personnel that could be deployed in UN field based operations,
- Enhance pre-deployment training of military, police and civilian personnel on International humanitarian law, with particular focus on the special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict,
- promoting women's participation in decision-making on the prevention, management and resolution of conflict in regional and international institutions,
- Contributing to the international effort aiming at raising greater awareness about these issues through the convening of special regional events. Tunisia has already hosted a regional seminar on this topic in September of this year which allowed participants from the western Mediterranean countries (5+5 dialogue) to exchange views and national experiences regarding the implementation of resolution 1325.

19. Tunisia will further develop implementation of resolution 1325 as part of its comprehensive approach to gender equality and women empowerment because we believe that empowering women is a moral imperative, it is also a sound policy and one of the greatest investments that we can make.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman,

20. This 10th anniversary, which coincides with the launching of the African Women's Decade, provides an opportunity to reaffirm the spirit and the core message of resolution 1325: that sustainable peace is only achievable with the full and effective participation of women. We must seize this opportunity to refocus international attention on the aims of this resolution and to galvanize all concerned parties to turn good intentions into concrete action and a tangible reality.

Thank you