

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
Tuesday, 26th October 2010, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by H.E. Ms. Lilián Silveira, Deputy Permanent Representative of Uruguay to the United Nations

I should like to join the numerous delegations that have taken the floor in congratulating you, Sir, for having convened this debate and in expressing most heartfelt thanks to all those, especially the women, who work every day to promote peace and security in all corners of the world.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), great advances have been made on the women and peace and security agenda, in terms of both breadth and depth, in such a way that today it occupies an important place in the range of legal instruments, policies and concrete activities of this Organization in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Despite this progress, women and girls undoubtedly continue to be the most vulnerable and most excluded in such situations. Reports from various conflict and post-conflict zones on physical and moral violence against women are a permanent reminder of the enormous gap that exists between our words and agreements in this forum and the reality of life on the ground.

However, and while it is impossible to measure it, we are convinced that the gradual and cross-cutting adaptation of the United Nations since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) to address the vulnerability and exclusion of women has averted many ills and promoted the gender perspective in many processes where otherwise this would not have been the case.

I should like to underscore a number of points that we believe are worthy of further efforts, such as the need to pay greater attention to the reintegration of victims whose rights have been seriously violated, in particular in cases of sexual abuse or exploitation; the need to continue fighting against impunity for those responsible for such violations; and the need to take better into account the economic and social dimensions of women's participation in post-conflict situations, with particular emphasis on access to education and employment. In that regard, we understand that the establishment of indicators such as those put forward by the Secretary-General will make a crucial contribution to monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of our actions.

Uruguay believes that the women and peace and security agenda is a fundamental part of a larger agenda that inextricably links the situation of children in armed conflict and, of course, the protection of civilians in armed conflict. It is therefore essential to make progress in the most coordinated manner possible in order to achieve synergies, avoid duplication of effort and take advantage in the most effective way of the instruments available to the Organization on the ground.

Clearly, peacekeeping operations are one of those tools, and a very relevant one. Over the past 11 years, such operations have gradually incorporated civilian protection mandates, giving special attention to women and children. Progress has been significant. However, periodic attacks against civilians, including in mission deployment areas, demonstrate the Organization's limitations in meeting the expectations of both local populations and the international community.

Measures that could overcome many of those limitations include clear and predictable strategies tailored to each mission; better coordination with the various actors on the ground, especially with host countries, which have the primary responsibility for protection; and greater material resources, which are absolutely essential.

We continue to be committed to development and to the implementation of the agenda for the protection of civilians in armed conflict, paying particular attention on women and children, both through our work at Headquarters and through our Blue Helmets on the ground. We also reiterate the importance of achieving the broadest possible support for that agenda. The high level of participation in today's debate is clear evidence of that.

The intrinsic complementarity that exists between participation and protection is probably the main

concept at the heart of resolution 1325 (2000), on which so much has been built and developed. It is therefore crucial to continue to promote greater participation by women in the various forums and areas linked to peace processes. In that regard, I should like to conclude by making special mention of the appointment of Ms. Michelle Bachelet at the helm of UN Women. We are certain that with her leadership, that new entity will play a central role in all areas linked with the women and peace and security agenda at the United Nations.