

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security
28th of October, 2011, Security Council Chamber

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Rosemary DiCarlo, Deputy Permanent Representative of the United States

Thank you, Madame President, for your delegation's work and accomplishments during your Presidency. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General for their participation today, and Executive Director Bachelet and ECOSOC President Kapambwe for their informative briefings. I welcome to the Council Orzala Ashraf Nemat from the NGO working group on Women, Peace and Security and thank her for her helpful remarks on the progress made and challenges faced by women in conflict situations. The United States also wholeheartedly welcomes the Secretary-General's report.

Madame President, the awarding of this year's Nobel Peace Prize to Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Yemeni activist Tawakkul Karman, and Liberian peace activist Leymah Roberta Gbowee is recognition of the role that women can play in helping resolve conflict. All three women are excellent examples of the difference women can make when given the opportunity to make decisions about the future of their countries. They have had significant impact on their societies and we congratulate them.

Over the past several years, the United Nations and its member states have taken important steps to increase women's participation in issues related to peace and security. We established UN Women and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Sexual Violence in Conflict. Through this Council's work, we defined what we expect of parties to conflict with respect to the protection of women. We established a framework to track implementation of Resolution 1325. Many states, including my country, are developing national action plans to guide their engagement on issues of women, peace, and security.

But all this is just a beginning. We must ensure that norms and institutional frameworks turn into action. What counts now is implementation and delivering results.

The Secretary-General's report provides examples of both real progress and the challenges ahead of us. We welcome the initiative of DPKO and DPA to include gender components, advisors, or focal points in all field missions on this issue. We're pleased that a gender and mediation specialist has been appointed to the Standby Team of Mediation Experts to ensure that women's concerns are addressed in conflict prevention and resolution, and not just toward the end of a conflict, as is often the case. And we are encouraged that a growing number of reports to the Security Council, as well as mission mandate renewal resolutions, address issues related to women in conflict and post-conflict situations. However, as the Secretary-General noted, "mere reference to women, peace and security resolutions is not enough." We must give UN entities strong support to implement and deliver results for gender equality.

More can be done to ensure that personnel of UN missions are adequately prepared to implement Resolution 1325 and supported in their efforts. Both pre-deployment training and mission-wide strategies on the protection of civilians, including the needs of vulnerable groups such as women and girls, need to be improved.

Gaps also remain in ensuring that those serving in UN missions are held accountable for their

performance, particularly in the case of sexual exploitation and abuse. As the Secretary-General acknowledged, "the UN still lacks a system that enables complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse to be reported safely." The United Nations needs to lead by example by actively enforcing the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse by UN peacekeepers. Conflict-related sexual violence must be addressed from the very start in peace processes, and more women should be included as mediators and members of negotiating teams

Madame President, the United States is developing a National Action Plan to accelerate implementation of Resolution 1325 across our government and with partners in civil society. The plan will be centered on the four pillars of Resolution 1325: participation; prevention; protection; and relief and recovery.

In the Participation Pillar, the U.S. supported Afghan women's inclusion in the High Peace Council and in follow-on shuras and negotiations, in the reintegration and reconciliation process at the local level. We've also awarded \$16.9 million in direct grants to Afghan women-focused NGOs. In the Protection Pillar, the U.S. contributed roughly \$2 million to the office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for sexual violence and conflict. We have provided numerous courses to foreign militaries on human rights, prevention of gender-based violence, sexual exploitation, and protection of civilians. In the Prevention Pillar, the U.S. has developed multiple programs that seek to address the root causes of conflict, including a \$26 million annual Reconciliation Program that supports innovative programming in conflict-affected countries and includes gender analysis. In the Relief and Recovery Pillar, the U.S. has provided significant funding to improve water and sanitation in situations in which women's safety and security are at risk.

Our ultimate objective is to fully incorporate women and girls into our diplomatic, security, and development efforts - not simply as beneficiaries, but as agents of peace, reconciliation, development, growth, and stability.

Madame President, as we move forward on our National Action Plan, we are cognizant that, as Secretary Clinton said at a Council debate on this issue last year, "ultimately, we measure our progress by the improvements in the daily lives of people around the world. This must be our cause – and empowering women to contribute all their talents to this cause is our calling." All of us now face the critical challenge of turning our commitments on women, peace, and security into results. Through our work here in this Council, and our national efforts, we believe that we can meet this challenge together.

Thank you, Madame President.