

**Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security (Sexual Violence)**  
**23rd of February 2012, Security Council Chamber**

*Statement by Ambassador Rosemary A. DiCarlo, U.S. Deputy Permanent Representative to the United Nations*

Thank you, Mr. President, for your presence here today and for organizing this open debate. I'd also like to thank Special Representative Wallström and Under-Secretary-General Ladsous for their comprehensive briefings, and of course, I'd like to thank Ms. Megheirbi for her remarks this morning and for all of her and the Working Group's efforts to advance the Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

Mr. President, the Secretary-General's report on conflict-related sexual violence demonstrates the importance of having a Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict. In just the past year she was able, together with the Team of Experts, to assemble the evidence available in this report, and to begin to address some of the horrors it describes. From the beginning, the United States has supported the Special Representative and the Team of Experts, both in advocating their mandates and financing their work. It is time and money well spent.

The Special Representative has, first of all, gathered facts. We know now how rape was used to humiliate and punish during the post-election crisis in Cote d'Ivoire. We now know that 625 cases of sexual violence by warring parties were recorded by the United Nations from December 2010 to November 2011 in the provinces of North and South Kivu and Orientale, in the Democratic Republic of Congo. We have before us figures, dates, and names of perpetrators and perpetrating forces in these countries as well as in Burma, Somalia, Sudan and South Sudan. We also now have information, sometimes very extensive information, about sexual violence perpetrated in post-conflict situations and situations of civil unrest, in the Central African Republic, Syria, Guinea, Nepal and elsewhere.

The Special Representative and the Team of Experts have demonstrated the extent of the problem. Their work is also increasing awareness of the issue and encouraging best practices. In the reporting period, more than 150 people in the DRC, from various types of security forces, were sentenced after trial to punishment for crimes of sexual violence. 9,534 Congolese survivors of sexual violence in North and South Kivu and Ituri provinces, including at least 1,700 children, received medical and psychosocial support. Congolese officers in two conflict-affected provinces are now receiving training from MONUSCO to train their own soldiers in how to prevent sexual violence and deal properly with witnesses and victims. These training modules will become the national standard for the DRC. In Cote d'Ivoire, the Special Representative received a commitment from the president of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that reparations for victims of sexual violence would be part of the commission's mandate. In Liberia and South Sudan, the Team of Experts has worked with national justice sectors on sentencing guidelines, training of police, Constitution drafting, and a host of other initiatives.

Mr. President, this is what the Office of the Special Representative is for. The Security Council's mandate is clear, and the Special Representative has been forthright in carrying it out. She deserves our strong support.

The problem, unfortunately, remains vast. We have only begun. Impunity is still alarmingly common. In the DRC, Sheka Ntaberi ran as a candidate for office even as a warrant was out for his arrest for sexual violence. In Guinea, as detailed in the Secretary General's report, two men connected to the violence of September 2009, which included sexual violence, have since been given high government positions. Such impunity should not be tolerated.

Apart from keeping a strong focus on ending impunity, we need to build our institutional capacity for early warning. We applaud the efforts of the Special Representative, United Nations Action, and UN Women to develop an early-warning framework.

As Council members, we need to make combating sexual violence part of our discussions with briefers, so that it becomes an integral part of our practice. We have recognized for some time that conflict-related sexual violence is a security issue, but this report places that matter beyond dispute. As is shown quite clearly, it is a security matter that impacts entire countries as well as individual communities, families, and individuals. It is also one that very much affects men and boys as well as women and girls. The report shows that in many places men are forced to watch their wives and daughters as they are being abused, and there are numerous

cases of men and boys being sexually attacked by other men as a deliberate tactic of conflict. This is a security issue, not a women's issue. We must treat it as such, and develop the same strategies of early warning and prevention that we use for other security threats.

The United States welcomes and supports the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report, particularly the need for all parties to conflict to make specific and time-bound commitments to cease acts of sexual violence and bring perpetrators to justice. We particularly endorse the recommendation to address conflict-related sexual violence in the context of security-sector reform initiatives, including personnel training and civilian oversight mechanisms. The Council should also continue to consider conflict-related sexual violence in authorizing and renewing the mandates of peacekeeping missions, including monitoring, analysis and reporting arrangements.

Mr. President, the United States will stay engaged with this issue. As part of our new National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, the United States is working to strengthen our efforts to prevent and combat conflict-related sexual violence as we advance women's participation in preventing conflict and keeping peace. Our ultimate objective is to incorporate women and girls into our diplomatic, security, and humanitarian and development efforts in conflict-affected countries - not simply as beneficiaries, but as agents of peace, reconciliation, development, growth, and stability.

For example, the United States believes it is crucial to increase women's participation in security forces involved in preventing conflict and building peace as one way to reduce conflict-related sexual violence. The United States funds and implements the Global Peace Operations Initiative, which has facilitated the training of 2,451 female peacekeepers worldwide. This initiative supports instruction on prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse. Beginning last year, we have supported the pre-deployment training of Peruvian women peacekeepers focused on women, peace, and security issues in support of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti. And in Afghanistan, U.S. and Afghan officers provide instruction and mentoring to female soldiers in the Afghan National Army. In 2014, 10 percent of the Afghan military academy's class will be women, and there are already more than 1,200 women serving in the Afghan National Police, many of whom serve in leadership positions.

Mr. President, preventing and combating conflict-related sexual violence is central to building lasting peace and brighter futures for countries undergoing and emerging from conflict. I cannot stress enough what a critical concern this is for my government. Sexual violence must cease to be used as a tactic of war and intimidation. For the sake of the vulnerable, and for the honor of nations, we as a Council must continue to support efforts to end this scourge.

Thank you, Mr. President.