

SECURITY COUNCIL

Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security: Sexual Violence in Conflict

15 APRIL 2015

Draft Statement

Madame President,

The Angolan delegation commends the Jordan presidency for the holding of this open debate on the critical issue of Sexual Violence in conflict situations, under agenda item Women, Peace and Security.

We praise the Secretary General and welcome his Special Representative Ms. Zainab Hawa Bangura for their leadership and long-standing commitment to the defense and protection of victims of conflict related sexual violence.

We also thank Mrs. Hamsatu Allamin for her valuable contribution to this debate.

Madame President,

Sexual violence in conflict situations stands as one of the most egregious forms of human rights violations. As the Secretary-general points out in his last report on conflict related sexual violence, 2014 was marked by continuing human rights violations and crimes against the integrity of women and girls in conflict situations, including abductions for the purpose of sexual and labor exploitation, forced marriages, human trafficking and sexual slavery.

As referred in the report, sexual violence perpetrated by State actors, or armed groups associated with States, is a matter of concern in countries and territories where sexual violence and rape of women and girls are used as a weapon of war and a tactic of terror.

Women and girls are targeted by terrorists and armed groups linked to violent extremism as trophies of war, aiming at humiliating and humiliating entire communities, specially the ethnic cleansing, changing the demographic composition of those communities.

Additionally, through sexual violence, the extremist groups, terrorize communities into compliance, displace populations from strategic areas and generate revenues through trafficking, slave trade and ransom.

The United Nations has been reminding that States bear the primary responsibility for the protection of its civilian population, in times of peace or conflict, particularly women and children.

The Secretary General stresses the vulnerability and increased risks endured by refugees and displaced women and girls, which face additional difficulties due to limited access to resources and services, such as education and health care, including comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, to training and sources of revenue. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure a better international community response in addressing women's and girls' specific vulnerabilities.

Madame President,

To eliminate conflict-related sexual violence it's key to address the root causes of gender inequality and change the mindset of perpetrators, victims and society at large.

Some progress has been achieved in the fight against sexual violence, since the adoption of resolution 1325(2000). The Security Council has assumed a leadership role in this regard by stressing the need for a more systematic monitoring of sexual violence in armed conflict situations.

Now it is imperative that the United Nations continues developing appropriate response mechanisms to counter such a scourge.

The important Assembly Declaration of commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict recommendations, among wihc we highlight the following:

Ensuring that all peace, security and conflict mediation processes explicitly recognize the need to prevent, respond to and reduce crimes of sexual violence;

Promoting women's full participation in all political, governance and security structures, as well as in all decision making processes;

Ensuring that national military and police doctrine is in accordance with international law so as to enable a more effective prevention and response to sexual violence in conflict;

Supporting the deployment of national and international expertise to build national capacity to hold perpetrators to account and to improve the response and support to victims and their access to justice;

Furthermore, the other United Nations decisions that we fully support stressed the importance of, inter alia:

Increasing the number of Women in peacekeeping missions and police units, with a view of countering the stigma and threats of reprisal against survivors;

Including specific actions to prevent conflict related sexual violence in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes;

Ensuring the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in conflict resolution and peace processes.

Madame President,

At the regional level, the African Union Commission, has made the protection of women's rights a priority and adopted measures to tackle the issue of conflict-related sexual violence, and to ensure women's participation in the prevention and resolution conflicts in Africa.

The Permanent Observer of the African Union and the Permanent Representative of Zimbabwe, speaking on behalf of SADC, will develop what both organizations are doing in this regard. Finally, Madame President.

It is crucial to prevent new such crimes and hold perpetrators accountable. Victims should be encouraged to speak out, to report violence and their voices should be heard and respected.

As we celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325(2000), we look forward to the 2015 High Level Review, which will enable us to make a assessment on the progress made, as well as the ongoing challenges in implementing the Council's Women, Peace and Security agenda.

Thank You.