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**UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL: GENERAL DEBATE ON THE 15TH
ANNIVERSARY OF UNSCR 1325**

REMARKS

BY

**H. E. MRS. BINETA DIOP, SPECIAL ENVOY ON WOMEN, PEACE AND
SECURITY OF THE CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION**

NEW YORK 13 OCTOBER 2015

Your Excellency Mr. Mariano Rajoy Brey, President of the Government of Spain and Chair of the United Nations Security Council for the Month of October,

Your Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, Secretary General of the United Nations,

Excellencies Members of the Security Council.

Excellencies Ministers and Permanent Representatives,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,

First of All, let me add my voice to that of my predecessors to congratulate you on chairing this general debate on the implementation of United Nations 1325 and convey the greetings of the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, HE Dr. Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma who sent me to represent her as she could not attend due to a pressing agenda that has retained her in Addis Ababa.

Today we are here to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of UNSC resolution 1325, a Resolution that Women of the world, and indeed all Nations welcomed as a watershed in the protection and promotion of the role of women and girls in the resolution of conflict and the peace processes.

I thank the Briefers who, through their insightful contributions have given us a clear picture of the status of 1325 across the world.

I salute the presence in our midst of HE Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of International relations and cooperation for the Republic of Namibia who, fifteen Years ago was at the forefront of the initiation of Resolution 1325. From there Africa takes pride to say that 1325 was born in Africa.

When agenda UN Resolution 1325 was adopted in 2000 the African Union took this historic resolution as its own resolution. It proceeded to embed provisions of the landmark Resolution into its own Protocols, Declarations and Other Policy Instruments and Resolutions.

Indeed, the Maputo Protocol (2003) stipulates in its article 2 that ... "State Parties shall combat all forms of discrimination against women through appropriate legislative, institutional and other measures..."

In Article 4, the Protocol provides that..... "State Parties shall take appropriate and effective measures to:

- a) Enact and enforce laws to prohibit all forms of violence against women including unwanted or forced sex whether the violence takes place in private or public;**
- b) Adopt such other legislative, administrative, social and economic measures as may be necessary to ensure the prevention, punishment and eradication of all forms of violence against women;**
- c) Identify the causes and consequences of violence against women and take appropriate measures to prevent and eliminate such violence.**

The Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa also asked Heads of State and Governments of Africa to commit to ..." Ensure the full and effective participation and representation of women in peace process including the prevention, resolution, management of conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction in Africa as stipulated in United Nations Resolution 1325 (2000) and to also appoint women as Special Envoys and Special Representatives of the African Union.

Africa has indeed taken actions with respect to requirements of UNSCR 1325.

Starting with the leadership of its own paramount continental institution, Africa adopted the principle of parity and acted on it. Out of the ten members of the Executive of the Commission, Five are women. The chairperson has continued to strengthen the participation of women by appointing recently a woman as the Secretary General of the Commission, as well as her Chief of Staff and Deputy Chief of Staff.

The African Union has conducted training with member states of women peace mediators, women election observers and gender advisors unionAfrica has taken a strong stand on the issues of sexual abuse and exploitation. The Chairperson has clearly stated a Zero-tolerance policy on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. In Somalia, the AU responded swiftly with the deployment of investigation and assessment teams following allegations against AMISOM and development of strong policies (Framework and Strategy on Conduct and Discipline for Peace Support Operations; Policy for Whistleblowers in Peace Support Operations; Policy on Prevention and Response to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in AU PSOs and Annex to the existing MOU. The AU has also deployed female peacekeepers and female police in peace support operations such as in Somalia.

In South Sudan, a commission of inquiry was mandated by Member States to South Sudan. Gender based violence was one of the focus area to investigate. As you know the Commission submitted its report, parties to the conflicts have officially received the report and now it has been agreed to establish a hybrid court to fight impunity.

In January 2015, The Office of the Special Envoy on Women, Peace and Security co-organized with UN Women a Pre-summit Regional Consultative Meeting on the Global study on 1325 commissioned by UN Women. The study recognizes that "...Africa has the highest number of women in political decision-making bodies and was the first region to appoint a Special Envoy on women, Peace and Security". Indeed countries like Rwanda, Seychelles, Namibia, South Africa, Senegal are among world champions when it comes to women representation in parliaments.

While we recognize and value these undertakings. It remains clear that progress on implementing 1325 is slow. To date, only 16 countries in Africa have developed national actions plans on 1325. Moreover, there is no systematic reporting on what the countries have done, are doing and project to do to ensure that gains are sustained, surpassed and become a routine act in public business.

It is in this perspective that Africa appointed a Special Envoy with a mandate to *"... ensure that the voices of women and the vulnerable are heard much more clearly in peace building and in conflict resolution..."* In my capacity as Special Envoy I have visited The Central African Republic, South Sudan, Somalia and Nigeria.

Mr. President,

Africa has decided to have women at the center of its agenda. In 2014 our leaders adopted an ambitious agenda aiming to bring peace and prosperity in Africa, Agenda 2063. It is unique in its approach as it translates the aspirations of our people "THE AFRICA WE WANT" in the 50 years to come. Agenda 2063 is a people's centered development. In its aspiration 6, Agenda 2063 aims to ensure that all forms of violence against women are eliminated and that women are fully empowered to contribute to a people-driven Africa. The 53 Member States have declared 2015 the year of women empowerment and 2016 the year of women human rights. No doubt that the women agenda is absolutely necessary to achieve peace.

Indeed in Africa, we want to see more actions, we need to see more accountability. We will carry this in partnership with civil society organizations, in line with the Livingstone Formula. Indeed, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union has created a space where Open sessions bring in civil society perspectives such as the annual Open session on the status of women and children in armed conflicts. In December 2014, PSC had an Open session on

“women, Peace and Security’. I facilitated the hearing of women’s groups from Somalia, South Sudan, Nigeria and the Great Lakes region to address the PSC. At the end of the session PSC recognized the need for an enhanced necessity for a clear monitoring and reporting on the women, peace and security agenda and mandated the Office of the Special envoy on Women, Peace and Security to formulate a Continental Framework to monitor the implementation by AU Member States and other relevant stakeholders of the various instruments and other commitments on women, peace and security in Africa.

During the January 2015 women stake holders’ forum that I referred to earlier, women demanded loudly “No more solemn Declarations but Solemn Actions and Solemn deliverables”. This will be our guiding moto for our endeavors.

I thank you