

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, (Conflict Related Sexual Violence)  
23 February 2012, Security Council Chamber

*Statement by H.E Mr. Wang Min, Permanent Representative of China*

I wish to thank Togo for convening this open debate. I welcome the presence of His Excellency the Foreign Minister of Togo to preside over this meeting. I would also like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Wallström, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations Ladsous and Ms. Amina Megheirbi for their briefings and statements.

China condemns all violence against women in armed conflicts, including sexual violence. We urge all parties to conflict or intervening parties to abide by international humanitarian law and other relevant international law. In that regard, I would like to emphasize the following five points.

First, to avoid and lessen the harm suffered by women in armed conflicts, we should first of all prevent wars and reduce the number of conflicts. The Security Council bears the primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security. To safeguard the rights and interests of women, the Council should actively engage in preventive diplomacy and promote the settlement of disputes by peaceful means, including dialogue and consultations. The mandates of the Council's resolutions should be comprehensively and strictly implemented. They must not be abused and, even less so, exceeded. Actions to provide protection for civilians should pay particular attention to avoiding further casualties among women and children.

Secondly, Governments bear the main responsibility for protecting women and combating sexual violence, as well as for implementing resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1960 (2010) and the relevant presidential statements. While the international community can provide constructive assistance, external support must comply with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and fully respect the sovereignty of the countries concerned.

Thirdly, it is necessary to strengthen the participation of women in all stages of the peace process, pay attention to their status and roles, and further tap their potential. China supports women in playing a greater role in preventing and settling conflicts and in rehabilitation and reconstruction. China supports the United Nations in appointing more female senior officials, special representatives of the Secretary-General and special envoys, and especially in increasing female representation from the developing countries.

Fourthly, the issue of women is that of development. In order to fundamentally solve various problems, including sexual violence, attention should be paid to promoting economic and social development, eradicating the root causes of conflicts and achieving the comprehensive development of women. The United Nations should actively promote the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, increase support and assistance to developing countries and, in particular, pay greater attention to the reconstruction and development of post-conflict countries.

Fifthly, in addressing questions related to women, peace and security, including sexual violence, there should be a division of labour among the relevant United Nations organs, which should collaborate with each other. In accordance with its Charter mandate, the Security Council should concern itself with situations that constitute a threat to international peace and security. At the same time, full play should be given to the role of other United Nations organs and bodies, such as the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and UN-Women, which should endeavour to generate synergy.

We hope that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General will work strictly in accordance with the mandate of the Security Council and play a constructive role in appropriately addressing the problem of sexual violence in armed conflicts.