

Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Council, April 17th 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Errázuriz, Permanent Mission of Chile to the United Nations.

Chile thanks the Rwandan presidency for having convened this important open debate on women, peace and security focused on the issue of sexual violence in armed conflict.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Canada on behalf of the Group of Friends of Women, Peace and Security, as well as that delivered by the representative of Slovenia on behalf of the Human Security Network.

We also welcome the report of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in armed conflict (S/2013/149), in particular with regard to the actions taken and challenges faced by States in protecting women, men and children from sexual violence in the context of conflict and post-conflict situations.

We underscore the role of the Security Council when it comes to women, peace and security through the adoption of resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1960 (2010) and 2086 (2013).

We welcome the work of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict Situations, Ms. Bangura, whom we assure of our full cooperation.

Chile is firmly committed to the fight against violence against women and girls, which we view as an atrocious crime that must be addressed in a comprehensive way. Violence, in all forms, goes against human rights and, as such, addressing it must be priority for States, and not an optional extra.

The policy of Chile in this area has been strengthened through our participation in a number of international instruments that have allowed us to consolidate our democratic principles and make progress in this direction. In August 2009, Chile published its national action plan pursuant to resolution 1325 (2000), which it structured around the gender perspective, human rights, participation and coordination. This year, Chile will begin updating the plan in line with the guidelines set out by the United Nations so as to incorporate dissemination, follow-up and awareness-raising mechanisms on gender and security. We aim to achieve the comprehensive and cross-cutting implementation of actions seeking to promote targets for peace and women's participation and leadership in the planning, coordination and implementation of prevention processes in conflict and post-conflict situations.

In that context, we have promoted the inclusion of the gender perspective and leadership functions in the context of our armed forces. There has also been an increasing awareness of gender among the armed forces and the equitable participation of women in peacebuilding and decision-making processes, as well as in international security.

We have achieved that goal with the active participation of a number of national bodies. In March, Chile organized a parallel event devoted to this topic in the context of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, entitled "Chile global network of women peacebuilders: implementation of the women, peace and security agenda — experiences from Latin America". As part of that event, the Deputy Minister of the National Service for Women of Chile, Ms. Viviana Paredes, reaffirmed Chile's commitment to the Security Council resolutions on this issue and to the national action plan and its adaptation to the new requirements that my country has proposed.

We believe it is equally important to continue to promote the implementation of resolution 1325

(2000) in our region through the exchange of experiences and international cooperation, both at the bilateral level and in the regional mechanisms for peacekeeping operations of which Chile is a part. That is the case with the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, for which Chile has provided female military contingents and in which it has followed the United Nations zero-tolerance policy for the sexual abuse and misconduct cases in which certain members of the Mission have been involved. We believe that the zero-tolerance policy should be a general standard that is strictly and zealously enforced in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations.

A key element in making progress on these issues has been the guidelines established in the Security Council resolutions that followed historic resolution 1325 (2000), which reinforce its principles and the undeniable progress that has been made on the issue of gender-based violence within the United Nations system. In that respect, it is worth highlighting the conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-seventh session. We promoted the inclusion, in those conclusions, of the relationship between the trafficking and illicit use of small arms and light weapons and the resurgence of violence against women and children, as we did in the text of the Arms Trade Treaty, which also deals with this issue.

We agree with the Secretary-General when he states in his report that national tribunals continue to bear the primary responsibility for the fight against impunity for cases of sexual violence and are an important complement to the efforts of the International Criminal Court, fundamentally in terms of restoring victims' dignity and holding perpetrators legally accountable.

One of the founding principles of Chile's foreign policy is the promotion of fundamental and universal human rights. In that respect, we will continue to support the efforts aimed at preventing violence against women in conflict and promoting mediation in conflict situations. We will continue to advocate for women's inclusion and participation in efforts at peacekeeping, peacebuilding and mediation.