

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

Statement by Mr. Li Baodong, Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations.

The Chinese delegation would like to thank Rwanda for the initiative of holding today's open debate. I welcome the presence of Her Excellency Ms. Louise Mushikiwabo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Rwanda, to preside over today's meeting. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Special Representative of the Secretary-General Bangura for their briefings. China also listened attentively to the statement made by the representative of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

Respecting and protecting women's rights is not only a reflection of progress in human society and civilization, it is also closely linked to global peace and development. Women are vulnerable to becoming victims of all sorts of violence in situations of armed conflict. Not only is that a grave infringement upon women's rights, but it is also a challenge to the full resolution of conflicts and the rebuilding of society.

In recent years, States Members of the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations have cooperated closely to fight sexual violence in armed conflict. China welcomes that. At the same time, in today's many conflict situations, sexual violence against women remains prevalent. The international community has a long way to go in defending women's security, rights and interests.

China condemns all violence against women in armed conflict, including sexual violence. China supports the full implementation of the relevant resolutions of the Council and urges parties in conflict to abide by international humanitarian law and other relevant international law to effectively protect the safety of women and other disadvantaged groups. I would like to emphasize three points.

First, in all countries, it is the Government that bears the primary responsibility for women's safety and rights. Conflict situations are all different. The international community should support the countries concerned in their efforts to safeguard women's rights and interests and should provide constructive assistance in that regard. External support should fully respect the sovereignty of the countries concerned, focus on enhancing their capacity-building and help them to resolve funding and technical difficulties.

Secondly, the United Nations should play its unique role fully and enhance cooperation and coordination with other relevant bodies. The Security Council, as the primary body tasked with maintaining peace and security, should focus on conflict prevention, dispute mediation and post-conflict peacebuilding, so as to create political, security and legal environments conducive to eliminating sexual violence. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Human Rights Council and UN-Women should coordinate their efforts and cooperate closely with the Security Council to foster synergy.

Thirdly, safeguarding women's rights and preventing and containing sexual violence in conflict require the full development of women. The international community cannot just pay attention to the phenomenon of sexual violence in conflict, demanding increased pressure and punishment and the establishment of monitoring mechanisms; it should also eliminate the sources of conflict, devote major attention to economic and social development, advance the status of women in real terms and make the empowerment of women a reality.