

Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Conflict
16th-17th December 2010, Security Council Chamber (GA-TSC-01)

Statement by H.E. Mr. Nestor Osorio, Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations

Colombia would like to associate itself with the expressions of gratitude for the holding of this debate, which will certainly contribute to increasing understanding and awareness of this tragic aspect of armed conflict. We would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2010/604), and Special Representative of the Secretary General Margot Wallström for her excellent presentation yesterday.

Allow me first to emphasize the importance of the role of the United Nations in promoting the participation of women in achieving peace, security and development, as well as in the initiatives undertaken in response to the problem of sexual violence in conflicts.

Colombia endorses the repeated statements issued by the Security Council in connection with all acts of sexual violence and other violence against civilians in armed conflict, in particular against women and children. We regret the fact that, despite those statements, various armed groups continue to commit such acts.

International efforts by the Organization, in particular the establishment of UN Women, contribute to strengthening coordination and cooperation in the implementation of mandates on women peace and security. Broad and inclusive intergovernmental consultations to assess the gender architecture and the advancement of women, as well as agreement among States as to the models and practices to be adopted on this topic, are fundamental to making progress in enhancing national capacities to eliminate sexual violence in conflict.

Strengthening the rule of law as an essential element in the search for lasting solutions to sexual violence in conflict is one aspect addressed in the report of the Secretary General. My delegation would like to highlight that approach and to encourage the United Nations to continue to broaden it.

The work done in this area by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the United Nations Development Programme has our full support.

Resolution 1888 (2009) includes provisions for increasing the participation of women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts. We agree that their participation in that regard contributes to creating an atmosphere of trust in which women and children can expose the abuses to which they are subjected. We also believe that their inclusion can generate greater participation by women in law enforcement, militaries and police agencies in countries in which they are deployed.

For several months, therefore, Colombia has been a contributor to the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, providing two female police officers with a strong background in human rights and the protection of children and adolescents. Colombia would like to reiterate its willingness to step up its contribution in that regard. We hope that, in implementing resolution 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009), mechanisms for cooperation, constructive dialogue and effective support to countries will be promoted. We also highlight the role that the General Assembly can play in strengthening cooperation with States in the complex tasks that have been set out.

Strengthening the role and capacity of women, as well as justice and the enforcement of their rights, is of utmost importance for the Government of Colombia. In that effort, the contribution of the United Nations system and the international community is essential.

Colombia, in its capacity as one of the Friends of 1325, will continue to closely monitor developments in the area of women and peace and security and reiterates its commitment to the implementation of policies, plans and programmes that expand and strengthen the role of women in peacebuilding.

Ms. Wallström's dedication, dynamic work and commitment to this cause deserve our recognition and all our support.