

CROATIA

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STATEMENT by
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Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia to
the United Nations

- Security Council-
Open Debate
Women and Peace and Security

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Mr. President,

Let me begin by extending my congratulations to you, Sir, and to your delegation on your assumption of the presidency for the month of October and assuring you of the full cooperation and support of my delegation. At the same time, I extend our thanks to the delegation of the United States for their able leadership during the very difficult month of September. I express our appreciation to you, Sir, and to the Vietnamese presidency for initiating this meeting and for your leadership role in the adoption of today's resolution 1889 (2009). I also welcome your personal contribution, Sir, reflected in your presence and chairing of the meeting today.

Our thanks also go to the Deputy Secretary-General, the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Executive Director of UNIFEM and the representative of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for their presence, their contribution and their dedicated work.

Croatia welcomes the focus on the needs of women and girls in post-conflict situations for sustainable peace and security. Croatia also welcomes the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) (S/2009/456) and its recommendations.

We align ourselves with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the EU. Here, I shall make additional remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. President

Almost a decade has passed since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). We have witnessed much progress in the area of the empowerment of women. Women have been trained in leadership and there has been an increase in a number of female peacekeeping personnel. The Security Council has, for its part, contributed to significant advancements on the issue of women and children in its agenda. It has adopted resolution 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009) on sexual violence in armed conflict under the umbrella of "Women and peace and security", as well as resolution 1882 (2009) that addresses, among other matters, the problem of sexual violence against girls.

These commitments are commendable, but we are of the belief that putting words into action is the only way that we can approach resolving remaining issues. And these issues are many. As many situations on the agenda of this Council have shown, women still have a long way to go in order to fulfill these empowerment goals as well as to fully realize their human rights, not only in armed conflict but in times of peace as well. Women still do not enjoy equal participation and full involvement in mediation and negotiation processes. Neither have they participated equally in processes of post-conflict reconstruction. Notwithstanding these shortfalls, what concerns us the most is the telling failure that women and girls are still not guaranteed safety even in refugee and IDP camps.

Mr. President,

As reported by UNIFEM, there is a substantial gap in financing women's needs in post-conflict situations. How did that happen? The answer is clear; women haven't been included from the very beginning of peace processes, especially in peace negotiations. It is essential that we reach the goal of appointing at least 30% of women on official negotiating delegations, so that women's needs in post-conflict peace building are recognized and addressed from the very beginning.

Croatia has included elements of resolution 1325 in its National Strategy on Gender Equality but we are aware that gaps in the implementation of resolution 1325 need to be continuously monitored. In that regard, my government extends its support for the leadership of a composite gender entity that is to be established within the UN. We see it as an important tool in advancing the issue of "Women and peace and security".

Mr. President

Allow me also to use this opportunity to extend my appreciation to the women of the region of Southeast Europe, who have experienced the burden of destruction and violence of armed conflict but have found ways to reach across borders to connect with each other and serve as peace builders in the region.

Rest assured, Mr. President, that Croatia, under the leadership of its first female Prime Minister H.E. Ms. Jadranka Kosor, will continue to give its full support to all areas of the "women and peace and security" agenda.

Thank you.