



Statement on behalf of the European Union

By

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**at the Security Council Open Debate
on Women, Peace and Security**

United Nations

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Thank you, Madam President,

The Candidate Countries Turkey, Croatia¹, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, the Countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro, Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

Madam President,

- The European Union would like to thank the Secretary-General for his presence at today's Open Debate. We are also grateful for the presentation of the Special Representative, Madam Wallström, and would like to express our gratitude to Under-Secretary-General Le Roy and the Military Adviser Lt.-Gen. Gaye for all the efforts undertaken by DPKO in this area.
- Continuing evidence of daily sexual violence in armed conflict and fragile countries underscores the need for the international community to intensify our efforts to prevent and combat such violence, including through measures to strengthen the rule of law and people's access to a functioning judicial system. With attention focused most recently on the Democratic Republic of Congo, alarming reports are also coming in from a range of other countries, including countries that are not on the Council's current agenda. Impunity continues to prevail for most acts of sexual violence committed in the course of recent conflicts. The EU therefore warmly welcomes the present report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of Security Council Resolutions 1820 and 1888.
- 10 years after the adoption of Resolution 1325, further prompt action from all actors is necessary to change the reality on the ground for civilians affected by sexual violence or who may be at risk of becoming victims of violence.
- The EU calls on the Security Council and all member states to redouble their efforts, notably in the fight against impunity. Often in the name of peace, amnesty is given to combatants who have used sexual torture or sexual violence as a tactic of war. But there can be no sustainable peace without prosecution of perpetrators and justice for victims; targeted and graduated measures should be imposed on all parties to a conflict

responsible for grave instances of sexual violence. Perpetrators, including commanders who commission or condone the use of sexual violence, should be held accountable. Data collection and follow-up on the prosecution of sexual offenders requires urgent strengthening

- At the Security Council's Open Debate of 26 October on Resolution 1325, the EU reiterated its firm call for the reinforcement of global monitoring of situations pertaining to sexual violence in armed conflict. The recommendations of the Secretary-General in this report provide concrete suggestions in this regards and the EU therefore fully endorses these recommendations. The call to establish monitoring and reporting arrangements is particularly noteworthy. Robust monitoring arrangements will enable the Council to track, deter and combat the use of systematic sexual violence in conflict situations.
- The EU warmly welcomes the adoption of the resolution today on Sexual Violence in Situations in Armed Conflict. We urge the Security Council to build on its strong commitment to this issue and to ensure the full implementation of this and all other relevant resolutions.
- The Security Council should adopt a zero-tolerance approach by including issues of sexual violence as a priority element of resolutions mandating its Sanctions Committees, and these should explicitly include sexual violence as a criterion for the designation of political and military leaders for targeted measures.
- The Security Council should also reaffirm its commitment to integrate the gender quality dimension and the protection of civilians from sexual and gender-based violence in the mandates of peace keeping operations. The connections between violence against women and their ability to participate in conflict prevention and management as well as peace building and development must be better understood. Local populations need a focal point for reporting of instances of sexual violence. Furthermore, sexual exploitation or abuse by UN troops or UN staff is totally unacceptable.

¹ *Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process*

- The EU supports the UN in its efforts to combat violence against women. This includes the work of the Secretary-General's Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict Margot Wallström. The EU also closely collaborates with the Secretary-General's Representative on Children and Armed Conflict, Radhika Coomaraswamy, and has recently reiterated its support for the implementation of the monitoring mechanism set up by Resolutions 1612 and 1882 by revising the EU implementation strategy on children and armed conflict.
- We also believe that the UN Human Rights system and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights plays a fundamental role in boosting the implementation of resolution 1888, including through early warning and the recent groundbreaking work on reparations for victims of sexual violence.

I would now like to briefly elaborate on some recent EU activities undertaken in response to resolutions 1820 and 1888, and complementing individual actions by EU Member States.

- Fighting all forms of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls, including in armed conflict but not excluding other situations of concern, is among the key objectives of the EU's human rights policy in external relations. In July 2010, the EU adopted 17 monitoring indicators for its 'Comprehensive approach' on the implementation of Resolutions 1325 and 1820.
- In addition to providing financing of over 300 million € to programmes addressing the needs and rights of women and girls in conflict-affected and post-conflict situations in over 67 countries, new significant funds will be made available for relevant civil society projects under the EU's Instrument for Stability.
- In October this year, the EU and the African Union organised a joint civil society seminar on women, peace and security in Addis Ababa, preparing the ground for reinforced EU-AU cooperation in this matter. In 2012, we plan to organise a stock taking workshop on the implementation of relevant Security Council Resolutions on our two continents, and we are currently looking for ways to support the training of both African peace keepers and the Africa Stand-by Force in human rights and gender issues; and to increase the numbers of women in such contingents.

- The EU has recently conducted a first ever lessons-learned exercise on mainstreaming human rights and gender within its Common Security and Defence Policy missions and operations. It is currently stepping up its efforts to train its crisis management personnel on human rights, child protection and gender, and has just adopted standard training modules on these topics to be used as a baseline reference by all 27 EU member states
- EU crisis management missions, 13 of which are currently ongoing, all have advisors or focal points on gender, and many carry out specific actions in the fight against sexual and gender-based violence. In Afghanistan, this program includes assistance to and training of the Family Response Units in the Afghan Criminal Investigation Department, and of the special 'Violence Against Women Unit' in the Attorney General's Office. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, the EU's Police Mission in 2009 created a Multidisciplinary Team to manage the fight against sexual violence and impunity.

In closing, Madam President, the EU reiterates its strong support for the UN's work in combating sexual violence in armed conflict, and warmly welcomes the Secretary-General's report and most particularly the resolution adopted today.

I thank you.
