

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

Statement by Mr. Shalva Tsiskarashvili, Representative of the Georgia to the United Nations

At the outset, let me join previous speakers in commending you, Madame, for organizing this open debate on a very important matter. Georgia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the European Union earlier in the debate.

Georgia welcomes the adoption of resolution 1960 (2010) and is proud to be its co-sponsor. We also welcome the establishment of UN Women and the appointment of Ms. Bachelet as the first leader of that body. We are convinced that, under her able leadership, there will be firm progress in solving problems that are on the women and peace and security agenda.

Despite some achievements and the fact that the issue of women's rights and peace and security has been on the agenda of the Security Council and other relevant United Nations institutions for a decade, we all recognize that serious challenges remain in transforming those positive developments into tangible results. Indeed, women and children are the worst-affected segment of populations in modern conflicts, in which they are influenced by the degradation of their living conditions and fundamental rights.

The violation of the rights of women is one of the principal characteristics of various conflicts across the world in both conflict and post-conflict situations. Unfortunately, 10 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the plight of women and girls in armed conflict is still dire. Regrettably, the war in Georgia in August 2008 was no exception in that sense. It resulted in the gross violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including violence against women.

Due to the sensitive nature of the crime, rapes are frequently underreported, especially in war. Nonetheless, the rape, torture and mutilation of ethnic Georgian women were by registered by various international and non-governmental organizations, including the independent fact-finding mission headed by Swiss diplomat Heidi Tagliavini. The documented cases unequivocally prove the involvement of occupying forces from a neighbouring country and its proxies in serious violations of women's rights, including sexual violence and humiliating treatment, among the other instruments of ethnic cleansing that we have witnessed on the occupied territories of Georgia since the early 1990s.

Even today, the rights and freedoms of Georgian women are jeopardized in the occupied territories of Georgia. Human rights watchdogs and international missions are banned from monitoring the humanitarian and human rights situation in the occupied territories. As a result, this situation, which has deteriorated, remains off the United Nations radar. The continuation of the current state of affairs cannot be tolerated by the international community.

Finally, let me reassure the Council that Georgia supports the efforts of the entire United Nations family to prevent, and eventually eradicate, violence against women.