

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security, November 30th 2012, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Wittig, Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations.

I would like to thank India for having organised today's open debate, which is important. I also thank the Secretary General, Madame Bachelet, Mr Ladsous and Ms Bineta Diop for their insightful briefings. Germany aligns itself with the EU statement to be delivered later on.

At the outset, let me stress that Germany unreservedly welcomes the Secretary General's report and especially his analysis, using the set of UN developed indicators. We also commend UN Women for its work leading the mainstreaming efforts within the UN system. We encourage UN Women to continue to closely cooperate with other UN organisations.

While the need to involve women in peace processes has been extensively addressed, progress is needed in all spheres of society in order to strengthen the potential of women as agents of change. So, again, we need to ask ourselves: What more can the Security Council, the UN and Member States do to close the gap between the normative framework and concrete action?

And let me make five points: Firstly, today's debate and Presidential Statement which was adopted on 31 October for the first time focus explicitly on the important role of women's civil society organisations. We very much welcome this focus as the inclusion of women and women's organisations is not a benevolent act but is a key requirement to any sustainable peace.

Second: Protection of women in armed conflict from all forms of violence, especially sexual violence, is crucial. But we must also protect those who fight for women's rights. They deserve our unreserved backing! From meetings with several women's organisations from different parts of the world I know that human rights defenders often face severe risks in carrying out their work.

Third: Women and women's organisations can also play a crucial role in the implementation of Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration- and Security Sector Reform--mechanisms as well as in political and constitutional reform and transitional justice. To enable them to play that role, women's organisations need to receive adequate support, which also includes financial support.

Fourth: Germany regularly supports women's organisations and human rights defenders financially and logistically. To name but a few examples: We have organized regional conferences in Tunisia and Argentina in 2011, and we will be sponsoring a conference in Panama on gender training, prevention of sexual violence and providing response tools and unhindered access to justice. Germany has also committed itself to the "EU-Charter of the European Shelter Cities Initiative" to increase protection of human rights defenders. Furthermore, I am happy to announce that Germany is working on a national action plan to further enhance the implementation of resolution 1325.

And lastly, the Security Council could do more itself to systematically integrate women, peace and security issues in its daily work, including when mandating or renewing UN missions. Envoys and Special Representatives should address those issues in their briefings to the Council. This should also include considerations on how to sustain gains made on protection and advancement of women's rights during UN mission drawdowns and transitions.