

**Security Council Open Debate on Sexual Violence in Council, April 17<sup>th</sup> 2013, Security Council Chamber**

*Statement by Mr. Laram, Permanent Mission of Qatar to the United Nations.*

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your presidency of the Security Council for this month. I would like to thank Rwanda, and in particular its Minister for Foreign Affairs, for convening this meeting, which is an opportunity to examine the measures taken by the Security Council to promote the participation of women in the resolution of conflicts. I would like to thank the Secretary-General and his Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict for their important statements and for participating in this meeting.

The State of Qatar understands that, as highlighted in the report of the Secretary-General (S/2013/149), there are still obstacles to women's participation and representation in decision-making, peace and transitional processes and that all regional and international bodies should support international standards to enhance women's participation in the protection of women's and girls' human rights, as well as in efforts at establishing peace.

With respect to enhancing the role of women, the State of Qatar has taken a special interest in the participation of women in the political field through many initiatives aimed at enabling women to play their full role in various areas, including the political and economic fields. Women have been appointed to important positions, including as ministers. The wife of the Amir of Qatar has supported educational, research and development programmes. The State of Qatar has adopted a preventive policy so as to protect human rights, in particular the rights of women. That was reflected in our 2013 plan, which states that women have a very important role to play in our society, particularly by participating in decision-making processes, especially in the economic and social fields.

We cannot talk about women and peace and security without dealing with the root causes of the problem. The protection of women is therefore not just a humanitarian issue but also an one that guides our efforts in many fields, especially in the application of rules for the protection of women in times of conflict without discrimination or selectivity. We must call on all parties to conflicts to take special measures to protect women and girls from sexual violence in conflict.

It is troubling that, even as we are holding this meeting, many women and girls in various parts of the world, including in the Arab world, are being subjected to forms of violence that lead to their killing and to the displacement of millions of people, especially women and children, who are more vulnerable and therefore more affected by such situations. They are exposed in particular to sexual violence and to psychological and physical violence. Women and girls are exposed to the worst kinds of violence resulting from conflict in our region, and they bear the brunt of that violence. In the Arab region, women in Palestine suffer from the unjust measures taken by the Israeli occupiers. Women in the Syrian Arab Republic are exposed to discrimination and to psychological and sexual violence, detention and imprisonment. Those acts are crimes against humanity and war crimes. The conflict in Syria has forced women and girls to flee from cities because of a lack of security and a lack of humanitarian access to those women and girls. That was reiterated in the report of the Secretary-General on sexual violence in conflict.

In conclusion, the continued attention by the international community to the role of women in peace and security and the enhancement of the role of women in decision-making processes will have positive effects on international peace and security and will mitigate the catastrophic results of conflicts all over the world.