



THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

335 East 45th Street, New York, N.Y. 10017
Tel (212) 439-4000, Fax (212) 986-1083

Statement by H.E. Ambassador PARK In-Kook

Agenda Item: Women, Peace and Security

October 29, 2008

New York

<Check against Delivery>

Mr. Chairman,

The year 2000 marked an important milestone in the advancement of women's participation in the peace building process with the adoption of the landmark resolution on women, peace, and security. It was eight years ago that the resolution 1325 was created to give a voice to countless women who would otherwise remain silent or go unheard during the international community's long journey towards peaceful prosperity. As the first to recognize the vital role women play in the cultivation of peace and security, the resolution also highlighted the need for concrete action. Now, as we assess our progress, we are both encouraged by the achievements and compelled to address inadequacies in the resolution's implementation.

The results of the last eight years of effort can not be ignored. Meaningful gains have been made across the field through the dedication of member states to the incorporation of women into the peacekeeping process. For example, the visibility of women's issues has been significantly heightened while further attention has been paid to the integration of gender perspectives in national policy-making. There has been greater recognition than ever before that women are indispensable to the success of peace building through

conflict resolution and prevention. Subsequently, this rise in awareness underscores the importance of women occupying positions of influence in the formalized process of security and peacekeeping.

These are encouraging first steps in the pursuit of mutual reinforcement among women, peace and security, but they are not enough. Member states, along with the international community, still bear the responsibility of producing concrete results through targeted mechanisms to ensure the full participation of women in the maintenance and promotion of peace and security.

Unfortunately, despite clear progress, countless women continue to suffer from inequities that stem from peace building procedures that have not yet benefited from the ideals of gender mainstreaming. Far too many women find themselves passively swept along by the peace process rather than active participants in the dialogue and policy-making. Ultimately, no sustainable peace can be achieved without giving women the ownership in their own security advancement. The full participation of women in field-based peacekeeping operations will make considerable progress towards the goal of gender mainstreaming.

The reality is that there is still a lack of women's participation throughout the peace process, from formal negotiations to field-based situations. One way to address this issue is to empower member states by providing a clear framework for the nomination protocol of women for systematic participation, including in high-level positions. The presence of women throughout the peace process hierarchy will ensure that vital gender issues will be integrated and dealt with at multiple stages of peacekeeping and security.

Reaching beyond the individual member states, women's full participation in the peace process must be actively supported by the UN system and built into its policy-making procedures.

As to the further efforts to be made by the UN system, first, adequate representation of women among the highest levels of UN peacekeeping leadership is very much needed. Their absence is felt most strongly in the crucial policy-making fields where UN agendas that directly affect women are formed without the full participation of the female voice. In this regard, we welcome the recent appointments of female senior officials by the Secretary-General in the Department of Field Support (DFS) and peacekeeping field missions, such as the Under Secretary-General of the DFS, the Special Representative for UNMIL, and the Deputy Special Representatives for UNMIL, UNMIS, MONUC, and MINURCAT, and would like to encourage the UN systems to have more female leadership representation at both Headquarters and the field level.

Secondly, it also calls for special attention by the Security Council to any peacekeeping proposal in order to ensure that it does not fail to integrate women and gender components into the heart of its protocol. The Security Council may also consider the creation of a separate procedural body dedicated to the incorporation of gender components in the development of peace and security to ensure that women's participation in the peace building process becomes a standardized issue.

There is also an urgent need to enhance the Department of Political Affairs with adequate human resources, which play a key role in peace negotiations and securing women's engagement. Our final point on the UN system is the creation of a stronger gender entity which will be fully equipped to be an effective mechanism supporting the implementation of the resolutions 1325 and 1820. We look forward to taking concrete action to that end during the current session of the General Assembly.

Mr. Chairman,

Our deliberation focuses on the full participation of women in the peace process, as engaged actors. However, we can not help but be reminded of the tragic situation of women victims in conflict. In particular, violence against women in post-conflict situations must become a thing of the past. Sanctions should be aimed directly at

perpetrators and any tolerance of impunity should be ended. In that vein, the recent resolution 1820 should be implemented in an effective and substantive way.

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to express its commitment to achieving concrete results in the pursuit of women's active participation in international peace and security. Ultimately, women are the engine that drives a nation's peace and security forward. It is our hope that open dialogue such as this and following concrete actions based on our deliberations will continue to advance the crucial role of women in the peace building process.

Thank you.