

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Rule of Law and Transitional Justice in Conflict-Affected Situations, October 18th, 2013, Security Council Chamber

Statement by Mr. Sinhaseni, Permanent Mission of Thailand to the United Nations

At the outset, I would like to thank Azerbaijan for convening this open debate on women and peace and security, the Secretary-General for his informative report (S/2013/525), and the briefers who spoke this morning.

We are pleased that the Council has convened an open debate on this issue for the third time, which signals the importance the Council attaches to the issue of women. Women account for more than half of the world's population. Women's participation and the recognition of their special needs are essential. The issue of women and peace and security is multifaceted. We welcome today's discussion, which focuses on the role of women in transitional justice and the rule of law.

A situation of conflict creates particular challenges in terms of human rights and upholding the rule of law. As is rightly mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report, rebuilding justice and the rule of law and enhancing gender-sensitive legal and institutional reform, in conformity with international standards, is crucial to protecting women's equal and inviolable rights in the aftermath of conflict. Measures to protect women victims and to redress wrongs against them and bring perpetrators to justice deserve particular attention from the Security Council and the cooperation of the international community.

My delegation is pleased to learn from UN Women that transitional justice mechanisms are increasingly responding to war crimes against women by providing specific arrangements to protect women witnesses. We also welcome the adoption of resolution 2106 (2013), in June, which focuses on accountability for perpetrators of sexual violence in conflict and stresses women's political and economic empowerment. Those mechanisms need to be effectively utilized. The Council's resolutions and presidential statements also need to be translated into actions if we are to be successful in our attempt to protect women.

Just last month, Thailand joined other like-minded countries in endorsing the Declaration of Commitment to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, initiated by the United Kingdom. We will continue to cooperate with all partners to eliminate sexual violence in conflict and bring the perpetrators to justice.

Although we do not have a situation of armed conflict in Thailand, the Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security have been applied as domestic guidelines on how to best protect women in our country. A Subcommittee on Women and the Promotion of Peace and Security has been established by the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. The Subcommittee is currently drafting policies and strategies as a basis for our national action plan, which hopefully will be adopted in the near future.

Enhancing women's access to justice is also one of Thailand's main priorities. Our Independent National Rule of Law Commission helps ensure that all State organs perform their duties based on the rule of law, without discrimination. The Council may be interested to know that on 15 November Thailand will host the Bangkok Dialogue on the Rule of Law: Investing in the Rule of Law, Justice and Security for the Post-2015 Development Agenda. This meeting is yet another example of Thailand's commitment to help promote the rule of law, justice and security. Our decision to co-sponsor resolution 2122 (2013) and all our efforts are based on our strong belief that the rule of law at the national and international levels is an indispensable foundation for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world.

Let me once again congratulate the Security Council, UN Women and other bodies with regard to women and peace and security and commend them for their ongoing work. The Council and the international community can count on Thailand's active engagement in and contribution to that important issue.