

Security Council Open Debate on Women, Peace and Security – 5 October 2009
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Venezuela

Ms. Medina-Carrasco (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and to thank you for organizing this important debate on a most important issue. We should like our statement to serve as a reflection on this issue. We are concerned at the tone of a number of statements, and we should like our delegation's statement on behalf of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to be properly understood.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is respectful of the norms of international law and the commitments undertaken in that context. Violations of women's human rights, given their many social, economic and political implications, undermine human coexistence and constitute serious crimes that compromise the dignity of women, as established in various instruments of international law. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reaffirms its clear and firm commitment to promoting and respecting women's human rights and its support for the elimination of all forms of violence against women, including sexual violence.

Venezuela believes that all relevant United Nations human rights entities should address the problems experienced by women in situations of armed conflict. We draw attention to the role that should be played by the Human Rights Council in that regard. We express our concern, however, at the fact that the Security Council continues to address General Assembly agenda items, which are outside the scope of its purview. That does not contribute to the adequate and balanced consideration of such items.

With regard to peacekeeping operations, we believe that the Security Council cannot be both judge and party. We are concerned at the possibility that, under article 16 of the Rome Statute, the Council could indefinitely stall an investigation or proceedings being conducted by the International Criminal Court in this area, particularly when agents or officials of a permanent Council member are involved. We are referring in particular to the Council member that denies the Court's competence and demands that countries into which it makes military incursions grant diplomatic immunity to its agents and its military and security personnel. That situation strongly promotes impunity for serious crimes against women and children. This is an aspect that should be of concern to all United Nations Member States.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela fully supports all efforts made within the General Assembly, its funds and its programmes to ensure the comprehensive consideration of the advancement of women and their genuine empowerment in the context of an egalitarian and just society that respects their rights.