



BRAZIL

Security Council

Open Debate Women, Peace and Security

Statement by H.E. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations

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Señor Presidente,

Agradecemos a España por organizar el debate de hoy y por su compromiso con la agenda relativa a Mujeres, Paz y Seguridad.

I also thank the Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN Women, as well as Ms. Julienne Lusenge and Ms. Yanar Mohammed, for their presentations.

At the outset, allow me to congratulate the authors of the Global Study on the Implementation of Resolution 1325 (2000), to be officially launched tomorrow. This ambitious and comprehensive document will provide a sound basis for the discussions among policymakers, activists and scholars during the 70th anniversary of the United Nations.

Along with the recommendations of the High Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and those of the Advisory Group of Experts on the Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture, we now have a solid triad of reports to underpin our deliberations on the review of the policies and practices of this Organization concerning international peace and security.

Mr. President,

Fifteen years have passed since the Security Council first recognized that women and girls experience armed conflict in particularly dramatic ways and, therefore, have specific needs, concerns and perspectives. This led to the essential acknowledgement that sustainable peace may only be attained if both female and male perspectives are fully taken into account.

Over the years, the Women, Peace and Security agenda has been integrated into the political mainstream of the United Nations. A comprehensive legal framework has been created through seven specific Council resolutions and a number of presidential statements.

Other UN entities, including UN Women, the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Commission on the Status of Women – which I currently have the honor to chair – have also contributed in this regard. In the next session of the Commission, the priority theme will be “women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development”, whereas the review theme will be “the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls”.

Likewise, the Special Representative for Sexual Violence in Conflict and several rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council have diligently worked to strengthen this vital agenda. The International Criminal Court and other domestic and international tribunals have produced a substantial body of jurisprudence regarding violations against women and girls.

It would now be unthinkable to create a major new peacekeeping operation without deploying gender advisors, without including the protection of women in the mandate and without training peacekeepers to prevent sexual abuse.

Much has changed since the days of Resolution 1325 - yet much continues the same. Women and girls are still subject to unacceptable violations of their rights in war zones around the world. Impunity for gender-based crimes remains a major challenge. Peacekeeping as well as peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts could still benefit from more female participation and leadership. Today's debate is therefore a timely opportunity to take stock and think ahead.

Mr. President,

Brazil fully agrees with the Global Study's assessment that the most effective way to avoid violence against women in conflict is to prevent war from erupting in the first place.

This High-Level Review should encourage us to renew our commitment to diplomatic instruments for the peaceful resolution of disputes, including good offices, mediation and the involvement of regional organizations. It is therefore of fundamental importance to increase the participation of women in peace processes and post conflict transitions, as emphasized by the concept note prepared by Spain.

Our initiatives to prevent and resolve conflict should also tackle the root causes and structural drivers of violence, including social, economic and political exclusion, and inequality, which affect women and girls disproportionately.

Mr. President,

The complex humanitarian crises arising from conflicts in the Middle East and North Africa should highlight the plight of women and girls who have been subject to many forms of sexual violence, including rape, sexual slavery and forced marriage, and who are also forced to abandon their homes and communities becoming refugees and internally displaced persons. Within this context, we should ensure particular attention to women and girls who belong to vulnerable groups, including indigenous or older women, those with disabilities, and members of ethnic or religious minorities, among others.

Brazil has long stated that supporting and hosting refugees is a moral imperative and a common duty to humanity. We have lately renewed our guidelines aimed at facilitating visas on a humanitarian basis for individuals affected by the conflict in Syria. Nearly 8.000 asylum-seekers, including thousands of vulnerable women and girls, have been issued such visas in recent years, many of which have found a new home in Brazil.

Mr. President,

During the recent Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality, President Dilma Rousseff underscored that women are not only beneficiaries of public policies and initiatives, but also agents of their own future.

Brazil sees protection and empowerment as inseparable aspects of the Women, Peace and Security agenda. Women and girls are not just entitled to safety, but also to an active voice. No decision concerning women should be adopted without consultation and consideration of their unique perspective.

At the international level, this includes formulating and implementing the mandates of peacekeeping operations and special political missions; conducting peace negotiations; and handling peacebuilding, recovery and humanitarian initiatives.

At the domestic level, governments should be ready to constantly design and improve their gender-sensitive policies.

Brazil has made some considerable advancement in the past decade. We enacted the Maria da Penha Law, which recognized domestic violence as violation of human rights, and more recently created the "House of Brazilian Women", a multidisciplinary space aimed at facilitating the access of women to specialized services and at protecting, empowering and ensuring their economic autonomy. Those initiatives have been recently crowned with the establishment of the Ministry for Women, Racial Equality and Human Rights. We are confident that our national efforts will positively influence all our activities in the international arena.

In this vein, I am pleased to announce today that the Government of Brazil has launched the drafting process of a National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security.

Our National Action Plan will comprise measures such as fostering the participation of women in peace missions; further enhancing the relationship between troops and civilians, particularly women and girls; and providing humanitarian assistance and technical cooperation to post-conflict countries concerning gender issues.

This initiative will complement the provisions of our National Policy Plan on Women, which already embraces recommendations contained in Resolution 1325, including strict legislation against sexual and gender-based violence.

Mr. President,

70 years ago, Dr. Bertha Lutz, a distinguished member of the Brazilian delegation, was one of the few women to sign the United Nations Charter. At that time, some of the main achievements were recognizing the equality between men and women and the right for women to participate in all activities of this Organization.

To conclude, let me reiterate that Brazil will remain strongly engaged in the advancement of gender equality and women empowerment issues at all levels and areas of work of this Organization. This includes the Security Council as well as the Human Rights Council, the Peacebuilding Commission, CSW, and all relevant specialized agencies. Thank you.