



## Lithuania's statement at the UN Security Council debate on women, peace and security

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Madam President,

I thank the Jordanian Presidency for convening this open debate on conflict-related sexual violence. I also thank UN Secretary-General for his comprehensive report and the recommendations contained therein. Madam Bangura, as SRSG for sexual violence in conflict yours is a heavy task indeed, but your work is a lifeline to many affected by these monstrous crimes. Last but not least our appreciation goes to Ms. Hamsatu Allamin for adding her passionate voice to today's debate.

Brutal and barbaric, sexual violence as a weapon of war is scarily cheap and effective. It is used by militant groups around the world to intimidate, change local demographics, seize land and clear access to scarce resources, crush ethnic and religious minorities, and force entire communities into submission. With the emergence of Da'ish and Boko Haram, public gang rapes, sexual slavery, sale of women and girls as young as pre-teens, rape marriages, forced impregnations and abortions have become the trademark of the brutal and wanton reign of terror.

One report by Amnesty International, released in December last year, details the abominable suffering of Yazidi women and girls under ISIS. A girl, Wafa, is quoted describing an attempt to take her own life with a fellow captive: "We tied scarves around our necks and pulled away from each other as hard as we could, until I fainted... I could not speak for several days after that." Like her, many captives of these terrorist groups prefer suicide to suffering the savage abuse and the consequences of rape.

Even in modern societies, rape victims find it hard to speak out. With all the care and services available, it takes years for them to heal. Imagine rape victims in countries where services are non-existent and social norms ostracize and punish the victim of rape, not the perpetrator.

Of course, rape victims will choose to keep silent where those who raped them are from the ranks of local authorities, police, or armed forces. Where reporting a crime may expose the victim and her or his family to additional threats and attacks. Where rape victims are forced to marry the rapist and punished for "moral crimes". Or where sexual abuse is committed by peacekeepers- those who by their very definition are expected to protect, not to abuse. SG's and various human rights reports repeatedly point to these problems, and while in many cases significant progress has been made both nationally and internationally, at the normative level, the gap between the law and the reality on the ground remains wide. Let me stress in particular the importance of protection, prosecution, and prevention.

We all agree that the responsibility to protect civilian populations, including from crimes of rape and sexual violence as a tactic of war, lies first and foremost with the state. Having adequate judiciary and penal framework to this end is essential, as is making sure that national civilian and military justice systems fully meet international legal and human rights standards.

But where that responsibility is not lived up to, for lack of resources, capacity, or political will, it is imperative that perpetrators of mass atrocity crimes, including those involving sexual violence, be held to account through existing international justice mechanisms, including the ICC. Human rights monitoring, reports by peacekeeping missions' human rights and gender components, reports by independent commissions of inquiry, deployment of UN rapid deployment of the Team of Experts on Rule of Law and Sexual Violence in Conflicts to situations of particular concern are essential elements in bringing the perpetrators to account. As a founding member of the ICC, Lithuania calls for the universal application of the Rome Statute as it recognises sexual violence offences as crimes against humanity.

Ensuring accountability for conflict-related sexual crimes, as for sexual and gender based crimes in general, also in terms of prevention. The perpetrators must know their hideous acts will carry consequences. This Council should be more vocal and systematic about referrals of perpetrators of conflict related sexual violence and rapes to the ICC and sanctions listings; also in its condemnation of conflict-related sexual violence and demands for credible investigations for all allegations of sexual violence committed in conflict zones, be it government affiliated forces, armed groups or UN's own peacekeepers. When signals of rape reach us, we cannot afford to ignore them or brush them under the carpet. Our silence and equivocations inflict additional wounds on the victims and serve to embolden the perpetrators.

On the protection side, the deployment of women's protection advisors, and human rights and gender awareness training for the staff to be deployed on peace-keeping missions, inclusion of sexual violence issues in the drafting or renewal of peacekeeping mandates have proven useful and should be further expanded. To change the calculus, more women peacekeepers need to be deployed. While the Secretariat's efforts to address this gap merit our full support, TCCs and PCCs can also contribute, as some already do. Due diligence policy must be applied and fully implemented.

The much too easy availability of small arms and light weapons in conflict and post-conflict situations adds to the already high risks faced by civilians, including an increased threat of sexual violence. Next month Lithuania will hold an open debate on the human cost of small arms and light weapons, which will aim to identify means by which the Council could more systematically take into account SALW-related threats, including their exacerbating effect on sexual and gender - based violence. Ensuring that gender considerations are given due attention in DDR and SSR programmes, systematic integration of gender-based violence into designation criteria of sanctions regimes, as well as improving the collection of gender-disaggregated data are just few examples where further advances by the Council are needed. In the wider context, the provisions of the Arms Trade Treaty that oblige states to take into account the risk of arms being used to commit or facilitate gender based violence before issuing export, must be robustly implemented.

One should also bear in mind that while women and girls are usually the first victims of conflict-related sexual violence, rape as a weapon of war is also used against men and boys, to humiliate, break down the morale, intimidate, and subjugate. Taking into consideration the distinct roles of WPAs and gender advisors (GAs), systematic deployment of both in conflict zones remains essential, and male rape victims should also be accorded all necessary support and treatment.

In particular, the stigmatization and integration of children born out of conflict related sexual violence and rape need to be addressed, delicately but seriously, to prevent lingering marginalization and animosities that may ultimately explode in unrest and renewed conflict.

Furthermore, existing regional and sub-regional cooperation mechanisms should continue to actively engage in promoting effective responses to conflict-related sexual crimes, including through awareness campaigns, action plans and cooperation frameworks, capacity building, and shared good practices. Lithuania will host later this month a regional conference, together with OSCE and UN Women, on the review of resolution 1325; providing a good opportunity to address these issues as well.

Finally, Madam President, prevention requires women's full and meaningful participation in all conflict resolution, post-conflict reconciliation and peace building processes, as active contributors and not merely as a token presence at the negotiating table. Their equal participation will contribute significantly to building enduring peace that will break the cycles of violence, including gender based violence.

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### Lithuania's statement at the UN Security Council open debate on children and armed conflict

Added 2015.03.25

Mister President,

I would like to thank the French Presidency of the Security Council for holding this debate. I also thank the briefers for their presentations and SRSG Leila Zerrougui for her dedication and passionate engagement for the sake of countless children affected by conflict. Lithuania aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. President,

Over a year ago, 59 students were shot and burned to death at a boarding school in Buni Yadi and more than 270 girls abducted in Chibok by Boko Haram in Nigeria. Imagine the anguish and agony of the parents of those girls, confined to waiting and guessing about their fate.

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### Statement by Permanent Representative of the Republic of Lithuania to the UN at the Security Council briefing on post-conflict peacebuilding

Added 2015.01.14

I thank the Deputy Secretary General Jan Eliasson and the Chair of the Peace Building Commission, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota for their comprehensive briefings. We commend the Chilean presidency of the Security Council for organizing this briefing and welcome the adoption of the PRST.

This exchange of views on post-conflict peacebuilding is very timely as we embark on the Review of the UN Peacebuilding Architecture. We have seen some successes in recent years, such as the conclusion of a peace operation in Sierra Leone in March 2014. Such successes however remain an exception rather than a rule.

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### Statement by Lithuania at the UN Security Council briefing on ICC-Sudan

Added 2014.12.12

Mr. President,

I thank Ms. Fatou Bensouda, Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court for her report and briefing on the situation in Darfur.

Next year it will be 10 years since the referral of the situation in Darfur to the International Criminal Court. Ten years that the people of Darfur have continued to suffer. The ongoing security and humanitarian crisis in Darfur is marked by widespread violence, impunity and displacement.

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### Lithuania's statement at the UN Security Council open debate on protection of civilians: Protection challenges and needs faced by women and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict settings

Added 2015.01.30

Women and girls are usually the first victims of conflict. They are disproportionately affected by conflict related displacement, rights deprivation, marginalization, and abuse. They are also the prime targets of sexual violence, rape, of forced and child marriages.

In 1999 the Security Council took a unanimous decision to address systematically the protection of civilians in armed conflict. Considerable normative base has been created and progress made since. That progress has been reinforced by the adoption of the landmark Resolution 1325 a year later, and relevant developments since.

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### Lithuania's statement at the UN Security Council meeting on human rights situation in DPR Korea

Added 2014.12.22

Mr. President,

I thank Assistant Secretary-General for Political AffairsTaye-Brook Zerihoun and Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights Ivan Šimonović for their briefings.

Lithuania welcomes this public briefing on the situation in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. As other Security Council members who called for this meeting, we believe that the scale and gravity of human rights violations in the DPRK, as detailed in the report of the UN Human Rights Council Commission of Inquiry, threaten to have a destabilizing impact on the region and the maintenance of international peace and security.

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### Statement by Lithuania at the UNSC debate on International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and for International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

Added 2014.12.11

I would like to thank Judges Meron and Joensen and Prosecutors Brammertz and Jallow for their informative briefings, and to commend their and their staff's commitment to the mission being carried out by both Tribunals and the Residual Mechanism.

Two days ago ICTR marked its 20th anniversary. While it is a sad reminder of the massive human tragedy of the people of Rwanda and the failure of the international community to protect, it is also a clear manifestation of our common determination to uphold and actively pursue accountability of those responsible for the most serious crimes.

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